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Mayhem and anarchy were just two of the less esoteric ingredients used to brew the latest Spring 86 Citadel Journal. In fact, this brand new issue of our popular magazine is easily the most mind-wrenchingly potent piece of publishing ever to escape from a lead-lined coffin. I can't tell you the secret of creating such awesome power (this information is securely locked away in the Citadel Publication Crypt), but I can give you some hint of the soul-blasting and utterly abhuman results ....

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WHITE DWARF

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Ian Livingstone
EDITOR: Ian Marsh
ART & PRODUCTION EDITOR: Mary Common
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT: Paul Mason
PRODUCTION ARTIST: David Chaney
PASTE-UP ARTIST: Trevor Hammond
COVER: Peter Andrew Jones © Solar Wind Ltd
ILLUSTRATION: Pete Martin, Steve Luxton, Mark Harrison, Tony Ackland, Michael Beach, Tim Sell, Trevor Hammond
TYPESETTING: Anne Kiernan, Cordelia Springer
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Dave Langford, Joe Dever
ADVERTISING: Jon Sutherland
PUBLISHER: Games Workshop Ltd
PUBLICATIONS MANAGER: Peter Darvill-Evans
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All correspondence should be addressed to *White Dwarf*, 27/29 Sunbeam Rd, London NW10 6JP.

There has been a great deal of discussion in the Letters page about departments in *White Dwarf*. More observant readers will undoubtedly have noticed the unannounced demise of regulars such as *Starbase, Heroes & Villains, Crawling Chaos, RuneRites*, and now *Fiend Factory*. In the early days of *White Dwarf*, when there were only a few role-playing games, having a department tied to each game made sense. With the greater variety of popular games on the market, having a department for each is impractical, and indeed restricts the content of the magazine. *White Dwarf* must move with the Times (although we're moving to Nottingham rather than Wapping!).

Meanwhile, here is the first of many 'theme' issues, covering that most maligned of all character classes, the thief. I think you'll find it up to our usual, quite remarkable, standards.

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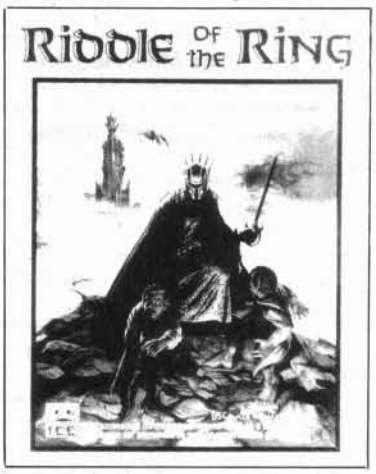
In Open Box, *fantasy and science fiction games and rulebooks currently in the shops are reviewed by independent authorities.*

OPEN BOX

RIDDLE OF THE RING
Boardgame
Iron Crown Enterprises £19.95

Riddle of the Ring is a boardgame in which the actions, options and play of the game are entirely driven by card-draw and card-play. The six part jig-map covers Middle-earth in reasonable – if not always completely accurate – detail. You will find most of what you seek but the map has been slightly deformed to fit the board. The artwork is undemanding but pleasant. Players represent Hobbits or Dark Riders, who move around the map looking for the Ring. Once found the Ring is carried off towards the Cracks of Mordor; en route other players may attempt to ambush, defeat, or rob the Ringbearer. What they can or cannot do depends on their cards.

The cards in *Riddle of the Ring* have a major advantage over standard rules sets in that one has the instructions



necessary for the use of that card on the card. Novices can play much more confidently without searching through the rules. The cards are also very attractive and allow a much higher quality of artwork than would counters. The cards come in a wide range of types. Travel cards may be played to boost movement (which is otherwise die-generated). More importantly they allow the player to move, do something, and then by play of card move again. Travel cards include horses, boats, eagles and ropes (for mountains, you see). Army cards come in the usual Good/Evil/Neutral varieties and are played (together with personality cards) in Battles. Each player lays down these Battle cards in turn until one cannot reply or five have been laid by both sides (Battle of the Five Armies, geddit?). Character cards have many uses including Battle and the acquisition of further cards. Other cards include the Ring, Riddles (these allow cards to be swiped if correctly guessed), Rings, Palantirs, and Spies, which allow you to spy on other players' hands. Cards are usually acquired at 'cities' (really notable locations), by playing character cards or stealing them by use of cards.

Although the rules are fairly simple and the play mechanics not really new, the whole game has a surprisingly good element of atmosphere. This is obviously assisted by the artwork and the naming of cards. Although his card is either used to reject die rolls or in Battle, knowing the card is Legolas seemed to give the game something extra. What is unlikely to arise is a storyline from the mish-mash of events and characters. Treebeard can be drawn anywhere and Shelob might pop up in the Shire on card-draw! We found this was pretty unimportant because played properly the game is fast and furious with cards being slapped down and picked up at a great rate. It's fast pacy stuff, and although the skill element may not always be as evident as its random factors, it can be just as enjoyable to try to get out of a hole than to plan for thirty minutes before moving. We enjoyed *Riddle of the Ring* and played a couple of games on the trot. Furthermore it can be played by up to eight players and would accommodate differing levels of experience with ease.

Complexity:	**2**	**Skill:**	**3**
Playability:	**8**	**Value:**	**7**
Production:	**7**	**Overall:**	**6**

Charles Vasey

ALONE AGAINST THE WENDIGO
RPG Scenario (CoC)
Chaosium £7.95

None of H P Lovecraft's tales about the investigation of the Cthulhu mythos centred on a *group* of characters: the hero is totally alone on his slide into madness and death. It is only natural, therefore, that *Call of Cthulhu* should have a few solo adventures. *Alone Against The Wendigo* is the first, and although a small team of NPCs accompany the main character, it is still a solo effort. None of the other party members have any bent towards 'Cthulhubusting', and we are thus left to contemplate the insane secrets for ourselves. Taking the part of Doctor L C Nadelmann (who may be male or female), we journey along the North Hanninah River, deep within the wilds of Canada. Our companions are Charlie (the guide; working because he needs the money to send his wife to Winnipeg for an expensive operation), and three lucky students from the Miskatonic University, picked for their bright, eager natures. The terrors that lie ahead for all of us will test our sanity, and may mean death for all. Gulp!

The solo is in the familiar format of numbered passages containing references which lead to other paragraphs, and so on. This is where the similarities end. *Chaosium* have also provided a system of numbers that tell you where you have come from (in case you get lost, or wish to follow a 'trail'). There are set sequences for use in the instance of Indefinite or Permanent Insanity. Each passage adds a certain number of points to Hanninah Mythos (a unique skill that will measure how successful you were in the adventure; it can go over 100%!), and less frequently Cthulhu Mythos. There are paragraphs that allow you to rest and heal. The four non-player characters are fully skilled, and you can roll against their skills instead of Nadelmann's if you wish. These skill rolls are common, and since Nadelmann can't be good at everything this is an advantage.

There are over 600 paragraphs, some of which are quite lengthy. *Wendigo* is also written in a style likely to enhance enjoyment. Besides the skill rolls, there are numerous 'odd/even' rolls which add even more unpredictability to a scenario that can seem *too* random at times. The adventure is very tough, and one game can be totally different from the last (although there are certain constant elements), so this is one solo that *can* be played over and over again. The possibilities are not easily exhausted, and it is a real challenge trying to succeed. On my first expedition, the party was finished off in just over a day, leaving me to stagger back to Fort McKenzie, the nearest habitation, where I was locked up for murder by the authorities!

There is but one criticism that I could level at *Wendigo* – the addition of Hanninah Mythos after each paragraph can break the action up, spoiling the atmosphere. Indeed, I have been so enthralled by the story at times that I have progressed at quite a rate, forgetting HM completely! The solo format works well for *Call of Cthulhu*, and I know that another such adventure is soon to be released. With a bit of luck, it won't be the last.

Production:	**8**	**Ease of Use:**	**8**
Skill:	**5**	**Value:**	**8**
Overall:	**8**		

Phil Frances

ERECH & THE PATHS OF THE DEAD
RPG Scenario (MERP)
Iron Crown Enterprises £7.95

Paths of The Dead is an *ICE* 'Adventure Module' designed for use primarily with their own *Middle-earth* and *Rolemaster* role-playing systems; as with their 'Campaign Modules' it also contains basic details on using the supplied statistics.

Any reader of *The Lord of the Rings* will be familiar with the Paths of the Dead – the haunted route under the White Mountains leading from Rohan into Gondor taken by Aragorn and the Grey Company to Erech, where he summoned his army of wraiths and spirits – the Oathbreakers condemned to remain in Middle-earth until his passing. The adventure module details the Paths and the Vale of Erech. In a crammed 40 pages it has lavish full-colour maps, history (both ancient and natural), and details of the current inhabitants of the area. It is

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set for the 17th century TA like much of the rest of the *ICE* Middle-earth material, and if you have seen any other module you will be instantly familiar with the layout of this one.

But you don't have to be a Middle-earth fan to pick up this module. It is very useful as a general fantasy rolegaming aid – for example, in the description of the *Daen Coentis* (ancestors of the Dunlendings), a human sub-culture which could be slotted into any world to give instant depth and background. The module also covers undead types in depth and many 'sites of interest' which any game could use: I have moved the excellently-planned fortress of Morthond several hundred miles north near Mirkwood in my own Middle-earth campaign, and plan to do the same with the surrounding town that is also detailed.

Although the whole module is very well laid out, neat, accessible and suitably illustrated, it is not perfect. As with a

number of other *ICE* modules, it gets carried away in one area – here it is the Paths of the Dead section (which is nothing more than a collection of tunnels beset with traps and monsters). In *Southern Mirkwood* they did the same thing with Dol Guldur and in *Bree & the Barrow-Downs* it was the proliferation of barrows. Nobody in their right mind would walk the Paths of the Dead or visit Dol Guldur, so why bother with pages of details? I find the notes on cultures, natural history, etc, a *lot* more interesting.

Complexity:	8	**Usefulness:**	9
Skill:	8	**Value:**	7
Production:	9	**Overall:**	9

Graham Staplehurst

SEND IN THE CLONES
RPG Scenario (Paranoia)
West End Games **£6.95**

Send in the Clones is the latest *Paranoia* adventure, and involves the troubleshooters with Teela-O-MLY (pronounced 'Teela O'Mally'), the media goddess of the Alpha Complex. Unfortunately goddesses sometimes have feet of clay, and Teela is certainly no exception. Unlike previous adventures it's designed for a party of troubleshooters of mixed security levels, from red to yellow, and definitely proves that a high security clearance isn't a recipe for a long and happy life.

As usual the adventure splits into three main phases: a prolonged hunt for someone who is manipulating The Computer's public-address channels to transmit subversive propaganda (those channels tend to get manipulated a lot!), a desperate struggle with the coils and folds of the complex's reorganised and intensely convoluted bureaucracy, and a trek through the media capital of the complex, sector NBD.

Clones is full of jokes – some a little obscure for English readers – and introduces the most obnoxiously funny robot in history, a chance to appear on one of the complex's most popular TV game shows (accompanied by a tactical board game for the inevitable combat phases), two secret societies (one worshipping Pepsi-Cola), and the incredible secret of Teela's popularity. As usual it builds into a no-win situation for the players, and their inevitable execution or assignment to crowd work on war videos (for example, as cannon fodder in a video shot with live ammunition) comes as a fitting end to the adventure. At 48 pages with a cover screen it's as long as the classic *Yellow Clearance Black Box Blues*, but not quite as funny and slightly less coherent. Too many of the situations are obviously contrived jokes, rather than logical (if absurd) results of previous actions.

Production:	7	**Value:**	6
Ease of Use:	6	**Complexity:**	7
Overall:	6	**Marcus L Rowland**	

LANKHMAR – CITY OF ADVENTURE
RPG Scenario/Supplement (AD&D)
TSR Inc **£8.95**

Lankhmar consists of a 96-page book with a back cover pocket containing a poster-size, full-colour map of the city, and a 32-page booklet of record sheets and player handouts. The main book starts with summaries of the Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser stories, with comments on their potential for adventures. While there is no substitute for reading the stories for yourself, this section is helpful for refreshing the memory and developing ideas. Then follows a district-by-district breakdown of the city, with detailed maps marking and describing 99 locations, and record sheets for your own campaign notes; this only scratches the surface of the city's potential. Another map shows the wider world of Nehwon (with notes). Next comes a section of nearly 100 NPCs. Our two heroes are covered in full *Legends & Lore* format, with a few adjustments which bring them closer to the stories. The gods and monsters of Nehwon are also covered, with copious additions to those in *Legends & Lore*.

Next, the workings of the city are described, with political factions, guilds and religions lovingly detailed, and a chapter on adventuring in Lankhmar introduces us to the niceties of haggling, bribery, the legal system, and the all-important Social Levels, something which makes a valuable addition to the *AD&D* game rules. A section on generating new non-player characters and buildings includes sample building plans which are useful in any context – Lankhmar or otherwise.

My one initial worry was whether the *AD&D* game system could fit a pre-existing, detailed fictional setting without the obvious strain that showed in the *Conan AD&D* modules, but chapter 9 put my mind at rest with a series of conversion rules. There is a little spanner-work necessary, especially with spell-casters, but the adjustments work surprisingly well once you get used to them, and little or none of the flavour of the original setting is lost. Given that *Lankhmar* is an entire campaign setting, and not just another *AD&D* module, the adjustments are forgivable and indeed necessary.

Finally, there is a series of set-piece encounters to provide random incidents or starting-points for adventures, and 'The Karvian Elephant', a 9th-12th level scenario – I would have preferred something a little lower to start a campaign with.

The colour map is a thing of beauty, and has a number of grey areas – literally – which the DM can design for him/herself or fill in with the series of city-block geomorphs from the booklet, which also contains record sheets, duplicate maps and other information for players.

All in all, *Lankhmar* is a delight – I was convinced it would need a separate game, but I was wrong. If you like the stories – whether or not you play *AD&D* – you should get it as an encyclopedia and a work of fan literature. If you play *AD&D* – whether or not you like Leiber's stories – *Lankhmar* is simply the best city module ever to see print – including *Thieves' World. D&D* DMs will also find it useful, although a small amount of conversion is necessary. Rush out and buy this one – it's a beauty.

Complexity:	7	**Usefulness:**	9
Ease of Use:	7	**Production:**	8
Value:	9	**Overall:**	10

Graeme Davis

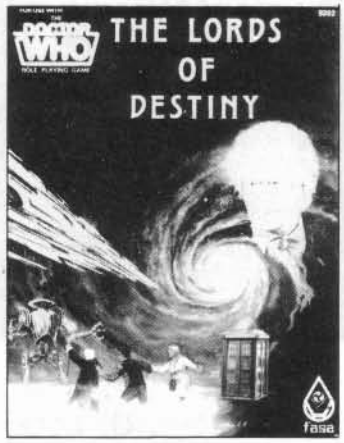
THE IYTEAN MENACE **£6.95**
THE LORDS OF DESTINY **£6.95**
RPG Scenarios (Dr Who)
FASA

What's the most important feature of a *Dr Who* story? Yes, you're right – it's the silly title! Well, as you'll have noticed, *FASA* are close, but not quite there. Still, the contents of these scenarios are *very* accurate simulations of the kind of stories that have made *Dr Who* a popular TV regular for over 20 years. Each of the single book scenarios is laid out in the same format used in the rolegame, and the artwork is just as variable.

The Iytean Menace, my favourite of the two, is set in London in 1885, and is attractively illustrated with period woodcuts that enhance the carefully created Victorian atmosphere. Without giving too much away, the plot involves the mysterious arrival in London of some anachronistic technology. It is the player characters' job to discover the source of this equipment, and ensure that the Time Stream isn't seriously disrupted. The plot is challenging, but not *too* intricate, and manages to interweave a healthy dose of Robert Louis Stevenson into the proceedings quite adroitly. In style, then, this is an interactive/investigative adventure. Gamers of the Rambo 'shoot-em-up' style of role-playing would get nothing out of it – what is called for is subtlety, tact and ingenuity.

The Lords of Destiny requires similar abilties, but is perhaps more likely to spawn a firefight. It is set aboard an enormous (and I mean *enormous*! – try 10,000 km long!) World-Ship which is whizzing through space at near-light speed, crunching planets as it goes. Its inhabitants aren't aware of the outside Universe, thanks to Supreme – the mega-computer which runs the whole ship. Meanwhile, a gang of rebels are fighting against the oppressive regime of the Captain-Lords, Supreme's lackeys. The adventure is plotted loosely but comprehensively, so that the possibilities are vast for the kind of plot twists which characterise the TV series. Will the player characters join the rebels, side with the Captain-Lords or remain unaligned? Who will be captured by whom, and will anybody get to say, 'No, no, not the Mind-Probe!'?

This scenario encourages imaginative refereeing, and plenty of characterisation, but lacks the period atmosphere of *The Iytean Menace* – it's just another 'spaceship puts the Universe at risk, aw, golly gosh' story. There's the same depth of information in each of the 48-page booklets – it's just that we have a headstart in knowledge about Victorian England already.



Both scenarios contain a set of pre-generated characters ready for use – and *The Iytean Menace* is designed as a means of introducing a (Victorian) character to the TARDIS crew.

If you've bought the *Dr Who* game, these scenarios would be a sound investment as first adventures to get your campaign going. Lets hope *FASA* keep up the quality.

Complexity:	7	**Ease of Use:**	6
Production:	6	**Value:**	6
Skill:	9	**Overall:**	8

Barry Bailey

FANTASY HERO
Role-Playing Game
Hero Games **£13.95**

Hero Games are best known as the creators of the *Champions* Superhero game system, which has already been joined on the market by their 'modern-day' and '30s pulp' products, *Danger International* (AKA *Espionage*) and *Justice Inc.* Only now has the company chosen to attempt the 'big sword and sorcery' field with *Fantasy Hero*; the results are very interesting.

As before, *Hero* have decided to base their new game on the system first introduced in *Champions*. One break with *Hero* tradition is that the game is presented as a single, unboxed, 160-page, soft-backed book (with, one hopes, good binding), with tolerable illustrations and no index (but a reasonable table of contents and solidly logical presentation).

The 'Hero System' is most noteworthy in that *no* dice are used in character creation. Instead, characters start with personal characteristics marginally above the average peasant, and a number (in this case 75) of 'Character Points', which may be spent to improve characteristics, obtain skills, or (in this game) to have use of magic spells or extra starting cash. Extra points can be obtained by accepting personal disadvantages such as odd looks, character quirks, dependent friends and suchlike. Thus a new character can be more or less exactly what the player wants to play, and players are encouraged to produce well-rounded characters with failings as well as strengths. The problem with this approach is that the system may be exploited by ingenious players, but a competent game master can usually restrain the worst excesses.

Skills in *Fantasy Hero* come from a reasonable list that should cover most fantasy situations (if in doubt, any new 'professional' skill can be invented), and are resolved by rolling a given number (usually linked to one characteristic or another) on 3d6 (the game only uses six-sided dice); the exception are a few combat skills and suchlike, which simply increase the options open to a character in battle. The only striking omissions are martial arts and serious acrobatics (both covered in *Champions*), which is a little rough on oriental monk-type characters. *Hero Games'* characteristics often seem numerous at first glance, but each actually has a well-defined meaning and application; there is a link between some 'primary' and 'secondary' characteristics which can be important in character development.

Magic is the area in which *Fantasy Hero* is the most interesting. Spells can only be cast by those with Magic skill, and are learned by use of the Spell Research skill or study with other characters – either way, character or experience points must be spent to achieve the knowledge required. Each spell is built much like a *Champions* superpower; one or more 'Effects' are selected, and then various 'Advantages' and 'Disadvantages' can be applied to bring the result more into line with the creator's initial conception. Finally, a points cost is calculated for the spell, and paid by the user. An unmodified spell takes one 'phase' to cast, with the caster making himself easier to hit than usual, and a skill roll is necessary, but all of this can be changed by advantages or disadvantages; suffice to say that a wizard who makes all his spells lengthy, difficult, expensive and dangerous to cast can produce more spectacular results than his faster colleague.

Combat uses *Hero's* wargames-style 'phased movement' system, with characters acting as often within a twelve-second turn as their Speed characteristic dictates, and chances to hit dictated by a 3d6 roll very like the skills system. Characters receive a wide choice of manoeuvres, allowing some showy fencing (and crude brawling); experienced *Champions* players should check the differences from the older system. Shields reduce chances to be hit, but armour absorbs damage; a moderately vicious encumbrance system should deter overmuch use of armour (especially by faster characters and spellcasters), while an optional hit location system adds realism, and rather superheroic 'presence attacks' allow victims to be browbeaten into surrender!

The rules are rounded off with some good straightforward advice on play, which emphasises the idea that the GM determines much of the detail of the campaign; thus the 'sourcebook' of monsters, equipment, etc, is advisory only (if good), and the adventures (a stereotyped inn, a simple solo hunt, and a fairly predictable quest) might need modification. However, they make up a good complete set of rules.

This is not a game for the lazy. Creation of a spell-using character (or monster) can mean the creation of a whole book of spells, and the options available to player and GM alike are wide. Furthermore, there *are* a few misprints and inconsistencies (especially in the magic item creation rules). Nonetheless, for those who want flexibility, high colour and playability, it's probably the best thing on the market.

Complexity:	8	**Ease of Use:**	6
Production:	8	**Value:**	8
Overall:	9		

Phil Masters

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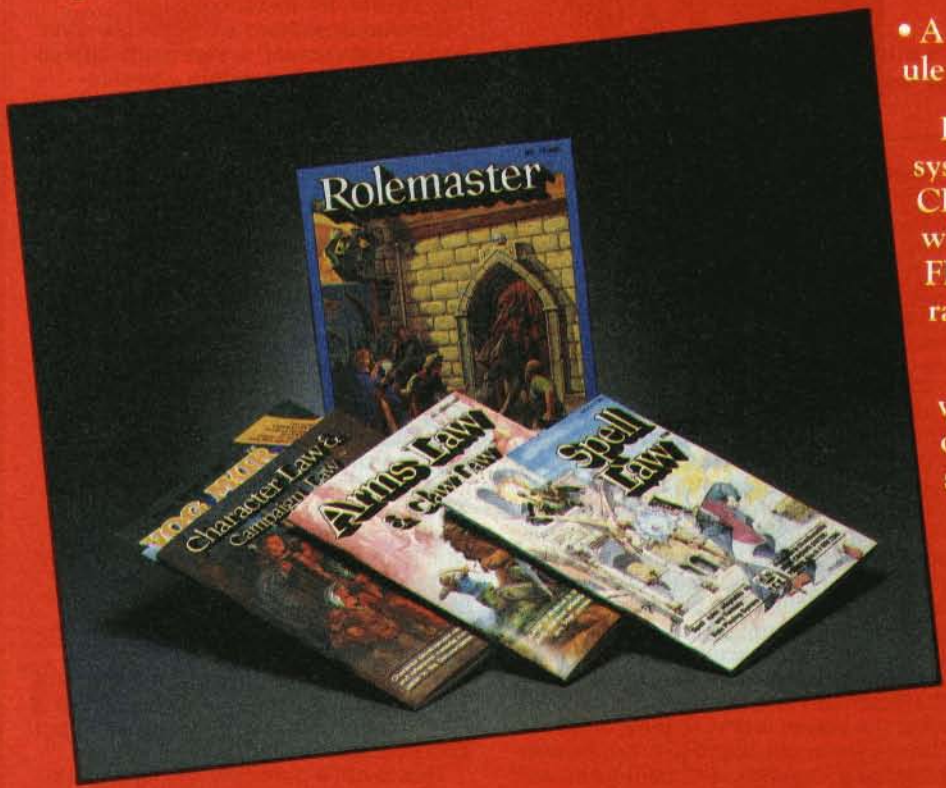

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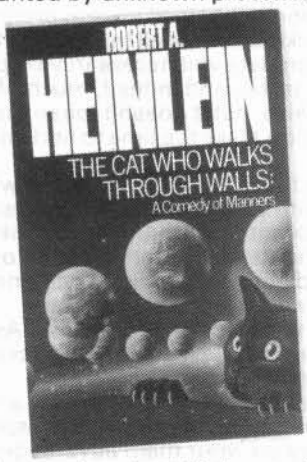
Critical Mass *is a regular fantasy and science fiction book review column, written by Dave Langford.*

O America

According to American legend, SF is 60 this year. In 1991, presumably, it can start drawing a pension . . . thanks to Hugo Gernsback's *Amazing Stories*, whose 1926 launch marks Year One for US fans and immortalized 'Hugo' as the name of a Freudian-shaped rocket trophy. Where this leaves prehistoric SF authors like Mary Shelley, H G Wells or Jules Verne is unclear: in SF, America rules by right of numbers. Of this month's books, 78% are from across the Atlantic, the rest being American simulations. Don't despair: several are triffic.

William Gibson swept the awards with his first novel *Neuromancer*, a tale of next-century cyber-piracy whose pace and excitement hook into your nervous system and fibrillate you to death like the killer programs he describes. The follow-up is *Count Zero* (*Gollancz* 269pp £9.95), set a few years later in Gibson's glittering, sleazy future. The events of *Neuromancer* are half legendary; organic 'biosoftware' is the rising new star. The cyberspace of the world data network, where *Neuromancer's* action peaked, has changed: not only are defences ('black ice') nastier than ever, but the net is haunted by unknown presences.



Gibson spins a taut triple narrative: an industrial-warfare mercenary trying to spring the inventor of 'biochips' from his corporate employers, a nicely drawn art expert tracing works of anonymous brilliance, a wimpish teenager calling himself Count Zero who botches his first try at cyberspace piracy but is saved, by Something, from black ice. . . . all these being aspects of someone's master plan. The high-speed Gibson technique recalls Ian Fleming's – sex, violence and brand names, and many a 'carbine-format Steiner-Optic laser with Fabrique National sights.' There's even a Flemingesque monster-villain and a generous dose of streetwise voodoo. Has a girl with a headful of biochips become an avatar of voodoo's Erzulie? Are the 'presences' *only* free artificial intelligences like that of *Neuromancer*? Decide for yourself as the name Count Zero shifts meaning in a chilling cyberspace climax. This may not have the impact of *Neuromancer's* first window on Gibson's future, but it's a far better novel.

Robert Heinlein makes another comeback with *The Cat Who Walks Through Walls* (*NEL* 374pp £9.95), starting well with violence and flight. The hero, being a Heinlein hero, pauses to marry his current lady friend before running – from an L5 colony, in a wonky spacecraft, to an unbelievable but funny forced landing, thence in several stages across a Moon which proves to be that of *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress*, 112 years on – and finally, on page 230, after his mildly entertaining travelogue which would have served a younger Heinlein for half a chapter, we get some plot.

Oh dear.

I'm afraid it's Heinlein self-indulgence time again. What's on the menu is those blasted inter-universal travellers from *Number of the Beast*, plus walk-ons from *Time Enough for Love, Glory Road, The Moon is a Harsh Mistress, Stranger in a Strange Land* and more. All lapses into introductions, logorrhoea and cuteness: a lurch into seven pages of dramatic finale (carefully unresolved) can't save the book. I was hoping to like it, too. Even after a merry exchange in which someone is treated with unreserved contempt for thinking it wrong that people should *die* if they can't pay air charges on the Moon – after which, rather than argue the point, Heinlein reveals this wickedly socialistic person to be a traitor and spy. This is know as loading the argument. . . .

The Memory of Whiteness (*Macdonald* 351pp £9.95) is the third novel by another young American, Kim Stanley Robinson, who definitely oozes talent. Confession time: the book is about music and I'm tone-deaf, so I may find it less riveting than you. I also break out in an itchy rash when addressed as 'dear Reader', which Robinson does constantly. That said, this is impressive for its scope and feel of connecting the two cultures: both music and multidimensional physics *sound* convincing. Johannes Wright is making a Grand Tour of the Solar System in 3229, from Pluto inward to the Sun, performing on the bizarre one-man 'Orchestra' devised way back by physicist Holywelkin, whose unified field theory led to system-wide colonization. Wright is being mysteriously plotted against, while devising an ultimate 'music of the spheres' incorporating Holywelkin's equations (remember Charles Harness's *The Rose*)? The philosophical implications naturally prove to be stupendous. A few pretensions could do with trimming, but it's a worthy effort. . . .

Philip K Dick's 1972 *We Can Build You* (*Grafton* 252pp £2.50) appears here for the first time. Though not one of his best, it has an uneasy power. The expected plot focus is the building of ultra-lifelike historical simulacra, eg Abraham Lincoln (who proves a sympathetic character), which is crowded offstage by the narrator's destructive obsession with the schizophrenic girl who designs the machines. Dick's underdog humour – little people against the world – is here, but overall it's a dark book. Behind the (irrelevant) robot Hitler on the cover, Chris Foss has painted a robot Philip K Dick. . . .

Eric Frank Russell is our odd one out. He was British, but cultivated a wisecracking transatlantic style for the US market, as more recently did John Brunner. *Sinister Barrier* (*Methuen* 201pp £2.50) is a historical curiosity from 1939, SF based on Charles Fort's offbeat speculations. 'I think we're property,' said Fort. Russell translated this into nasty energy beasts who herd us like sheep, and chronicled the results when the facts leak out. Painfully dated, but a must for the collector's library. Eighteen years later, Russell had improved his technique no end for *Wasp* (*Methuen* 175pp £2.50), a much-loved story of perverse warfare. 'By scrawling suitable words on a wall, the right man in the right place at the right time might immobilize an armoured division.' James Mowry is filled to the eyeballs with sabotage techniques and, in a favourite Russell gambit, dumped on an enemy planet to subdue it single-handed. Fast and funny – but less so than *Granada's* definitive editions, which like Dobson's hardback gained much from Russell's later (1958) revisions.

Robert Silverberg's *Sunrise on Mercury* (*Pan* 176pp £1.95) comprises thirteen stories dated 1954 to 1979. All are exceedingly slick and competent, though I wonder whether Silverberg in 1986 feels twinges of guilt about his patronizing attitude to 'primitive' aliens back in the 50s. The whole book goes down smoothly and tastes pretty good throughout. Half an hour later you'll be hungry again.

The best thing about *National Lampoon's DOON* (*Grafton* £2.50 176pp) is Bruce Pennington's cover, a lovely send-up of his paintings for the NEL *Dune* series. (Goodness knows what made *NEL* switch to the far less evocative artist who now disfigures the books.) Inside, author Ellis Weiner does a cut-rate version of the famous *Bored of the Rings* treatment: get in there and make as many jokes as possible (25% of them incomprehensibly American). The idea of Doon, the Dessert Planet, whose plains are roamed by giant killer pretzels, the galaxy's sole source of the mind-bending liquid *beer* . . . that's funny. There are good pokes at Herbert's pretensions: the elliptical quotations, the weird words and glossaries, the conversations in which neither party ever gets to the point (but *thinks* a lot, in italics). But with the best will in the world, a parody of a particular author gets tiresome after a few thousand words.

[*You mean like this clever Langford parody you're doing? –Ed.*]

Okay, I can take a hint. . . . □

HOW TO MAKE CRIME PAY

A Lecture for Apprentice Thieves in AD&D, from Guildmaster Jon Smithers

The final lecture to the apprentice thieves of Kynoch is delivered by the guildmaster. As he enters the crowded hall, a reverent hush for the wisest of thieves descends over the audience. The lecture is invariably the same, and the guildmaster always begins . . .

I'm delighted to see that we have so many of our trainees here, and that most of you have survived the rigours of training. Before unleashing you on the streets of our city to indulge in the more practical aspects of your course, I have a few words of advice.

You will receive a generally hostile reaction from so-called heroes, especially if you choose to associate yourself with them to make the most of their 'get rich quick' missions, and it is these perilous quests I shall deal with first.

Such adventures can prove pretty tiresome for members of our honourable profession, what with those high and mighty mages and clerics and those clumsy fighters pushing the poor thief around, and always into the most dangerous positions. What's more, if they achieve their goal as a result of all your skilful activities, they usually claim all the glory. But if you even fail to pick a lock once, they'll never let you forget it. So although I'm sure the smarter thieves amongst you have already worked out how they can rectify such an unpleasant situation, for the benefit of our slower-thinking trainees, I'll explain how.

Firstly, make sure you know exactly what you're getting yourself into. If you've heard a rumour about a treasure hoard, don't rush off unprepared with the first bunch of adventurers that happen your way. Think before you act, it can save a lot of heartache – not to mention your life. A treasure trove is bound to have some sort of history to it, and there are no better specialists than ourselves to unearth such information. By making a habit of listening into private conversations, or taking a look at information in 'locked' libraries, you will find an invaluable source of information to substantiate any rumours of treasure, and find out about any problems associated with any particular one. Don't ignore obvious sources either: ask the peasantry questions, listen to those dotty old men with their stories and songs; you never know what you might learn that will be of some benefit later. Of course almost anyone can gather this sort of information, but since mages and clerics spend most of their time reading books or practising their arts, and fighters spend most of their time swinging metal, this only really leaves you to go

Above all, remember you are not a fighter, so do not let yourself be drawn into this role unless it is absolutely necessary for survival (or unless you feel that the moment is right). Fighting is the easiest way to get killed in this profession.

Your thievish skills should be used to their full. By all means scout ahead for the party, or climb up to those places they cannot reach, but ensure that your conditions for doing this are met in full. If you are scouting, tell the others to be quiet and to remain where they are. Whilst you are off, cover as much ground as possible so that you find out exactly what you're getting yourself (and your acquaintances) into. This way you'll avoid any unnecessary danger. Secret doors and passages, concealed foes, and unpatrolled corridors are easier to find this way.

Finally, remember that caution is the better part of valour. Keep your wits about you at all times; if trouble is brewing you may be the only one to spot it in time and prevent disaster. If a fight seems to be going the wrong way then run away. There's little point in you dying as well. This may seem rather cowardly, but it may well be quite useful for the party if they are captured to have an 'outside agent'. Make sure you tell someone where you're off to before making your exit, and tell them to retreat too, otherwise you may well face some unpleasant accusations later.

Acting in this manner may not make you a hero overnight, but if any of you are thinking of entering the hero business, you're in the wrong profession. If, however, you want to stay alive – which is rather handy if you were hoping to build up a reputation – then this advice may well keep you alive. You probably won't be sung about, but your colleagues may well start respecting both you and your opinions.

This adventuresome lifestyle may well not suit most of you, and indeed, it is my opinion that adventuring is for the foolhardy. Thieves should stick to being thieves. No one can outperform us in our natural element of the town, and this offers plenty of opportunity for safer adventures, and a long and prosperous career.

The more light-fingered novice is advised to consider practising the arts of the pick-pocket or cut-purse. It is ill-advised to start by just sauntering down a street, selecting a victim, casually bumping into him and picking his pocket before running off. It may work once or twice, but in the long run it is far better to work with a team, and to plan out the operation beforehand. Besides, what happens if you're caught in the act? Hurried excuses won't convince anyone.

Whilst you are well-advised to have fellow thieves in the team, it is not absolutely necessary. The usual ploy works best with three team members, although can be done, at a pinch, with two. You can employ more if you want, but remember that this cuts your profits.

Each team member should be given a specific role. The first is that of decoy, and it is generally true that the female sex is best suited to this role, especially if your target is a man. The second person is the one who actually lifts the goods, and the third member acts as a receiver. His role is to carry the goods away from the scene of the crime once they have been snatched.

Choose the location for the operation out and gather it. Remember that this information might well save everyone else's necks later. Not all the information you accumulate will necessarily be particularly useful, and indeed, much of it may be false, but it doesn't mean that you shouldn't take the time to find things out.

Before finally setting off, decide what to take with you. If your compatriots are typical adventurers, then it is most likely that the fighters and clerics will be overburdened with armour and weaponry, and the mages will have forgotten everything except for their books. As a consequence, it falls upon you to bring along the important equipment.

The main point to remember at all times is not to overload yourself: speed and agility are your main advantages. Small, lightweight objects are, therefore, the order of the day. For weapons, daggers have obvious advantages, and you should secrete a number of them about your person. The best sword to use is undoubtedly the shortsword, since any other type is too cumbersome. You haven't been trained as expert swordsmen, and if you do have recourse to use a weapon, it should only be in the direst of emergencies. Remember to leave fighting to the professionals – it's not what they brought you along for, anyway – and use them to protect you!

A secret weapon is always useful to have for emergencies, especially in the event that you are careless enough to get yourself captured. Weapons can be hidden in a number of ingenious ways. The most obvious is a small knife hidden in the heel of your boot. Other less obvi-

ous locations for concealing knives include hatbands and belts, although you'll only be able to hide small, flat, springy throwing knives with any degree of success. Throwing knives disguised as pendants, revealing their true nature once the blade springs forth, can give you the edge – so to speak – when your opponents think you're unarmed. My personal favourite, however, is a scarf with a piece of fine wire threaded through it, which makes an effective garrotte and is especially easy to conceal.

A good rope is a vital part of many a thief's equipment. One made from silk is best, since it is both strong and light. Human hair, if it suits your tastes, is also remarkably good.

If you can afford the time and money, cultivate a good relationship with an alchemist. This person can supply you with a number of useful gimmicks, such as flash and smoke bombs, and sleeping dust. These are extremely useful for covering escapes or causing panic.

A hollow tube can be useful if your travels take you near any water; it can be used for breathing through, and also for blowing that sleeping dust I mentioned through keyholes into a room. Finally, never forget your regular items of equipment, especially your lock picks.

Accompanying a group of adventurers calls for a different code of behaviour, and you should aim to conduct yourself properly if you want to keep on good terms with your fellows. It is not, therefore a good idea to steal from your comrades. However, this does not preclude you from, shall we say, 'borrowing' a few choice items from any treasures you find. Don't overdo this since, even the stupidest barbarian will eventually realise something up if there are never any gems amongst the coins. They are especially prone to reacting in an extreme fashion, and it's a mite difficult carrying on one's profession without a head.

carefully. A crowded place is preferable, although if it is too busy, it will only impede the smooth running of the job. Markets, fairs, inns, and the crowds around street shows are good places to operate.

Planning will help the operation run smoothly. Prepare code signals to indicate the victim and to indicate the timing of each stage. Get a good story prepared, so that if you are questioned your excuses sound plausible.

Your target is, ideally, someone who looks 'friendly' and not too powerful – heavily armed or armoured subjects should be avoided. Foreigners are the best bet, if only because no one really trusts them in the first place.

The decoy should then attract the victim's attention, thus distracting him from the events around his purse-strings. The target can be knocked so that he stumbles or falls, or the decoy can drop something in the hope that he will help retrieve it. There are other methods of course, and I won't bore you with the remarkable ingenuity shown by one of our ladies in an attempt to distract a most difficult subject. . . . Once your victim's attention is elsewhere, the other two team members move in from opposite directions. The receiver should

arrive mere seconds after the purse has been lifted, so that it is taken well away from the scene of the crime by the time the victim suspects something is wrong. Even if he does suspect something is amiss, there will be no evidence available to indicate who is responsible.

If you can't bring yourself to trust teammates, or if a solo career appeals to you, then burglary is an option worth considering. Careful pre-planning is most important in this field, and you should make sure you know everything you can about the proposed target. If it is a shop or work place, visit it during the day so that you know some of its layout. Check the building's entrance: find out which windows are barred and shuttered. Make a note of guards and street patrols, and work out their frequency. Find out when the building is quiet so that you don't enter while its inhabitants are still awake. This checking may seem tedious, but it is for your own benefit in the long run, and will help prepare you for almost every eventuality that may occur during your intrusion.

Quiet entrances, preferably facing back streets, should be used to gain access since it is less likely you will be spotted. Night-time is best, for only a chronic insomniac is likely to bother you, and the streets should be empty, except for the odd sleepy-headed guardsman. Don't just think in terms of street-level entrances. Padding along in the shadows is all very well, and indeed, it's one of the skills we teach – or try to teach – you. But a safer route is offered by the rooftops: there is less chance of running into someone, and the only occasion anyone will usually look up is if there is a noise of some kind. Travelling via the city's roofs does have its problems, and as such it is best suited to the more acrobatic thief. Watch your weight as well – it gives the profession a bad name if a portly thief accidentally falls through a fragile roof covering!

The rooftops have other advantages besides making you less obvious. For instance, it is far easier to abseil down a rope than it is to climb up a wall, and will give you better access to upstairs windows. There are usually enough projections for you to tie a rope around, although don't try anything stupid – like hammering in pitons at the dead of night.

Your escape route should be carefully worked out. It should include sidetracks, switchbacks, and double-tracks. The best escape routes utilise ground that would-be pursuers cannot. And under no circumstances should you run straight for home. Keep your head at all times, and you should be able to get out of unexpected traps.

On the job make sure you're wearing dark clothing, and nothing that will reflect light is showing. Light skin and hair is best darkened or covered, and avoid giving any toothy grins; it may well be an easy job, but self-congratulation can wait until you're safe. Those pearly-white teeth of yours can catch the light and may well give you away. Take the minimum amount of equipment: a rope if it is necessary, your weapons and lock picks, and anything specific to the mission. And don't forget to muffle anything that rattles. One very useful gimmick to have is that sleeping dust I mentioned earlier; it's a real godsend if you bump into a restless inhabitant.

Your training should be good enough for you to work out how to get in. Once you're inside, however, your behaviour is all important. Caution is essential at all times. Keep your eyes and ears open, and at the first sign of trouble – leave. Killing anyone who discovers you is not a desirable alternative – it is distasteful, and incurs heavier penalties. Remember that you're not common thugs. If you think that there is a trap, make sure you look for it and disarm it: over-confidence will eventually be your downfall.

Don't steal too much: concentrate on finding small, valuable items which won't slow you down if you have to run for it. Moderation will also ensure that your target still has enough wealth to

keep his business going, making him ripe for plundering again at a later date. Don't wreck the place either – it is unseemly, gives thieves a bad name, makes too much noise, and will make the place harder to raid again.

Finally, a few places that I would advise you to avoid as targets: temples – because they tend to be well guarded with soldiers and sorcery; the residences of mages – since they are too well guarded by magical traps and wards; and government buildings – unless, that is, you feel really confident. Stealing from Thieves' and Assassins' Guilds isn't a course of action you should be thinking of either, unless you want a particularly short life.

The glib-tongued will undoubtedly succeed best practising the arts of the con man. Some of the more worldly-wise of you have probably already tried this after an adventure, selling off gems for more than they are worth. It's quite possible that you've been conned out of those very same gems. However, this is only touching upon the surface of a profitable career. You'll need plenty of bottle, and this is really best left to those of you with a really cool temperament.

Planning, again, is important, but all you really need is a convincing story. As well as having the correct spiel, it also helps if you have the correct props. If, for example, you are trying to pass yourself off as a mason, then make sure you look like one. Wear the correct dress, and even carry some of the tools of the trade – and no, a stone block will not do, that whispering wag at the back. It is also important to know a little about the subject in question, otherwise it will be very easy to catch you out.

Now on to a few basic cons you can start with. Getting hired to do a job, taking a deposit, and then not doing the job can be quite profitable – as is the case with the mason scam. You simply find out who needs a job doing, undercut other competitors by a reasonable amount, demand a deposit, and then disappear. Cover as many people as possible in the shortest possible time, because bad news travels fast.

If you've hit on hard times, or just want to make a few silvers, pretending to be a beggar is an easy deception. Many of our brothers practise the art with considerable success, so I believe.

Selling things that do not belong to you is another good ruse. This can be done in two ways. In the first instance you don't even need the object to show to your customer; all you need to do is convince him that you will deliver the goods later. This is very unreliable, however, and is best used against barbarians and bumpkins. The second way is to get hold of something that doesn't belong to you and then sell it directly. For instance, if you know of any empty house, then you may well be able to sell it to a number of different customers.

An effective con which will appeal to the artistically inclined among you, is one that can be used on parties of adventurers. Simply make a number of false maps which indicate the whereabouts of hidden or long-lost treasure. Disguise yourself (if possible), and then sell these maps to adventurers along with your carefully prepared story about how it came into your possession. And make sure you're well away from the area when the adventurers return – they don't have much of a sense of humour.

Regardless of the nature of your crime, always try and frame someone else, and create an alibi for yourself. These need not necessarily be substantiated later, but with a little deception can be very effective. It all helps to prevent you being caught.

Finally, and I'm sure I don't need to remind those of you who're staying with us, never forget to cut your Guild in on the profits. We like to look on it as a return for the training we've given you, and of course you also benefit from the extensive protection we can offer. Be careful out there, and don't get caught. □

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FM13 Orc in chain w. spear
FM14 Orc in chain w. bow
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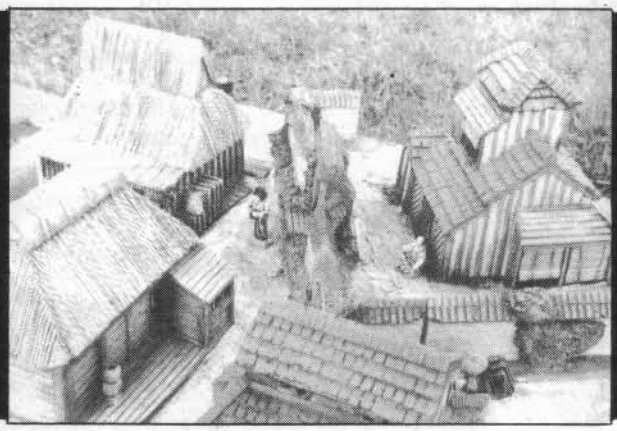

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The Justice Department Accounts Division for Judge Dredd, by Marcus L Rowland

Justice Department Briefing – ACC-DIV 01-2106
The Accounts Division is probably the least understood and appreciated section of the Justice Department. Most Judges regard its members as a necessary nuisance, responsible for keeping the books and ensuring that the Justice Department receives enough tax revenue to cover expenses. While the Division *is* a useful brake on the excesses of Judges who squander the Justice Department's resources, it's also probable that Acc-Div is responsible for solving as many cases as any of the other specialised divisions, in its role as the Justice Department's fraud squad.

For example, the Pusey kidnap case [Ref *JDC* p20] initially came to Justice Department attention when Acc-Div noticed a large withdrawal from Pusey's bank account. The Da Vinci blackmail case [Ref *JDC* p22 and *JDJM* p6] was also cracked by Acc-Div, though Judge Dredd made the final arrest in both cases.

While most of the specialised work of Acc-Div will not interest Judges who are working on the streets, some operations will, inevitably, require the co-operation of units from the general pool of Judges, and of other specialised divisions of the Justice Department. For example, evidence might be found to suggest that a well-known gangster is preparing to transfer funds from the Mega-City. As well as offering a golden opportunity to arrest such criminals for tax evasion, the reasons for such a transfer might be very interesting. Perhaps the mob has sold out to alien interests, another gang war is imminent, or a really large load of contraband is about to hit the streets. Payments to Blitzers and other criminal organisations might also be tracked by Acc-Div, leading to the arrest of the perps who put out the contracts. Occasionally an Acc-Div investigation will require the help of the Wally Squad (as plain-clothes investigators) in cases of fraud, and Acc-Div is naturally dependent on the help of Tek-Div's computer expertise. Even Psi-Div have occasionally helped with Acc-Div investigations. Acc-Div has also participated in many SJS investigations; sudden acquisition of money is a sure sign of a corrupt Judge. Most Crime Blitz search teams include at least one member of Acc-Div, who is responsible for examining papers and other financial evidence.

Finally, a word of caution. Recently Acc-Div has received expense claims ranging from the ridiculous to the fantastic. One recent arrest (for littering) followed a chase which involved 6 Lawmasters, 4 H-Wagons, a Pat-Wagon, and the destruction of property worth more than thirty thousand Creds. The Klutz case [Ref *JDC* p38] is another classic example of over-spending; Judge Dredd made a special flight to the Asteroid Belt to arrest a minor perp on petty charges (ranging from littering to running on a walkway). Other Judges have shown similar disregard for the economics of the Justice Department, and are warned that their extravagance may eventually result in disciplinary action.

GM's Briefing
Acc-Div is most useful as a moderately active nuisance to players. Typically, the Acc-Div Judge is the person who's turned off a spaceship as dead weight [Ref *TJC1* p45], vetoes projects because they are too expensive [Ref *TJC3* p63], or fails to appreciate things which should be blindingly obvious [Ref *TJC3* p60]. There is reason to believe that Cal himself may once have worked for Acc-Div [Ref *JC1* p4]. However, not all Acc-Div Judges are wimps; remember that the Justice Department has incredibly high standards, and that even Acc-Div Judges may occasionally see action. If you want to emphasise this point, a nice touch might be a memorial to Acc-Div Judges who were killed defending a tax office, or some other strategic economic point, during the Apocalypse War.

Acc-Div Judges should always have the Use Data ability, and often the Sense Crime ability. Other abilities should be allocated as needed. Almost all Acc-Div Judges will be Judge – 1 personnel, with a few senior Judges at Sector level and above. Acc-Div is usually overworked, and its officers tend to look pallid and out of condition from continual poring over synthi-paper ledgers and computer displays. Many will be elderly or disabled Judges who have drifted into this relatively quiet backwater after street service; they probably deserve nearly as much respect as the Tutor-Judges of the Academy.

Typical Acc-Div Judge 1
Judge Winslow

S	I	CS	DS	TS	SS	MS	PS
1	26	28	32	47	43	27	32

Special Abilities: Use Data

Note: Pallid, balding, wears spectacles (an obsolete affectation which is probably against Justice Department regulations). Age mid-forties, stooped shoulders, light build. A career accountant. [Ref *TC1* p45].

The Chief Accountant
Judge Quimby

S	I	CS	DS	TS	SS	MS	PS
2	37	44	45	62	46	29	000

Special Abilities: Use Data–2, Sense Crime. Quimby's special abilities gain an extra 10% bonus when he deals with financial records, due to intense training.

Note: Negroid, curly hair, fit. Probably a relatively recent transfer from general service or the SJS. Mid-thirties, stocky. [Ref *TJC3* p60.]

Player Judges should not be encouraged to join Acc-Div, but may be assigned to Acc-Div as 'muscle' on a raid, as spies, or in any other role the GM may prefer. Don't always assume that Acc-Div will be efficient, reliable, or even honest; an accounting error might easily leave a Judge with no expense money, under suspicion of graft, or deprived of equipment and other resources. Although senior Acc-Div Judges will probably be street veterans, and are likely to receive periodic vetting, constant exposure to money and the technology and techniques of fraud may eventually lead an occasional renegade astray.

Acc-Div is also useful as a way of forcing Judges to do things the hard way; occasionally tell players that lab work for their case has been delayed because Acc-Div won't authorise the invoice for some new piece of crimelab technology, or that there are no H-Wagons available because the case budget won't run to them. Don't use this idea too often; it works best if the players aren't too used to arguing with Acc-Div and don't realise that they are essentially paper tigers, easily forced to back down. For example, you might tell the Judges that the case they are investigating (for example, a local illegal gambling ring) won't warrant the use of an interrogation suite without much more evidence, and thus trick them into following a perp into some form of trap.

While GMs shouldn't try to enforce hard and fast rules in this area, they should be prepared to step in when a player is taking things to ridiculous extremes.

As a rough guide, use the following equation to work out the budget for any type of investigation:

Budget = (10000 × P × V × Y) ÷ G

P = Number of perps (to maximum of 50).
G = Grade of offence.
V = Number of victims (count 'victimless' crimes as 1, to maximum of 50).
Y = Typical sentence (years; count 'Life' as 70, each month as 1/10 year, and each day as 1/300 year in short sentences).

Example 1: A gang of 3 cannibal mutants led by the evil Fanglord eat a Judge alive. There are four perps and one victim, the sentence is life, and it is a grade 1 offence. The budget will thus equal 2.8 million Creds. This may seem rather high, but remember that Judge murder investigations often involve hundreds or thousands of Judges, and massive resources. In practice the budget will probably expand as the investigation uncovers other criminal activities, and a Judge slaying should rarely be under strict budget control.

Example 2: A juve drops a gum wrapper on the street. There is one perp, the crime is victimless, the sentence is, on average, 100 days (1/3 year), and it's a grade 4 offence. The budget is thus 825 Creds. In practice most normal perps at this level will only be arrested if caught in the act, and the Justice Department will rarely bother to launch a full-scale investigation, unless some form of prevention campaign (such as a campaign against Scrawling) is in progress.

It's safe to assume that a minimum of a thousand Creds is available for any investigation, as a way of avoiding many petty calculations.

Obviously you need to have some idea of the cost of an investigation. Since our sources are rarely specific about costs, the following are shaky approximations that shouldn't be taken too seriously:

Item	Cost (Creds)
One Judge/hour	500 + (100 × level)
Tek or Med Judge/hour	900 + (100 × level)
Psi Judge/hour	2,000 + (400 × level)
Any road vehicle/hour	50 × size (tons)
Any air vehicle/hour	200 × size (tons)
Any spacecraft/hour	10,000 × size (tons)
A Lawmaster	50,000
A Lawgiver	2,500
Small gadget	500
Interrogation suite/minute	1000
MAC/minute	25
Any complex laboratory procedure	2d10 × 1000

Costs for Judges include the costs of training, food, transport, administration, etc. They don't include the potential cost of keeping a Judge from other duties; for example, the other crimes that might be committed while a Judge is tied down at a particular location. Costs for vehicles and other items per hour include initial construction, paid back throughout the service life of the vehicle. Similarly, costs per minute are based on the original cost of the equipment in use and its upkeep. Round vehicle weights *up* to the next ton for this calculation; if you don't know the size, make a guess then double it.

For example, assuming that Dredd is a Judge–8, it costs around 1350 Creds an hour to keep him and his bike on the streets, a real bargain for the Mega-City. If a Manta tank weighs 30 tons, it costs 9,000 Creds an hour to keep one in the air.

Scenario Outlines

1.Undercover Operation. Jim L Fixit, the famous kneepad importer, is suspected of evading tax by diverting some of his company's cash income (a relatively small part of the operation, but still worth having) via a system of multiple ledgers. Acc-Div want to prove that money is being siphoned off before it is entered into the company computer, and track its eventual destination. The Judges are to infiltrate the company, find the ledgers, and stop Fixit destroying them when an Acc-Div raiding party arrive. Unfortunately Fixit runs a very informal operation; his employees are on friendly terms, and the usual behaviour of a Judge would stick out like a sore thumb. There are three ledgers, all printed on 'flash' paper which will ignite if a ring-pull is ripped from the book's spine. One is in Fixit's office, one is in one of his shops, and the third is hidden in a false cover amongst a collection of antique books in his apartment. All three will be needed to prove the case.

2. Spending Cuts. McGruder is visiting the Luna–1 Colony, and the head of the SJS has just been hospitalised. In consequence the Chief Accountant is currently acting head of the Justice Department, and has decided to make some sweeping economies. Simultaneously an epidemic of harmless but embarrassing pranking has started; no one is being hurt, but the Judges' dignity will suffer several blows. The Judges must try to solve the pranking case while being studied by an Acc-Div efficiency expert who is trying to find ways of making the department more cost-effective. Meanwhile one of the Chief Accountant's assistants has realised that a lot of money will be saved if the number of guards on Devil Island is reduced, and authorised the change without consulting his superiors . . .

Sources

JDC = Judge Dredd Collection, *Titan Books.*
JDJM = Judge Dredd RPG Judges Manual, *Games Workshop.*
TJCn = The Judge Child Volume n, *Titan Books.*
JCn = Judge Caligula Volume n, *Titan Books.*

I would like to thank Rory McLean for the original idea of this article, and Terry Pratchett and other members of the Novacon 15 SF convention for suggestions. □

Marcus Rowland is the author of Judgement Day, Games Workshop's *first scenario pack for* Judge Dredd – The Role-Playing Game.

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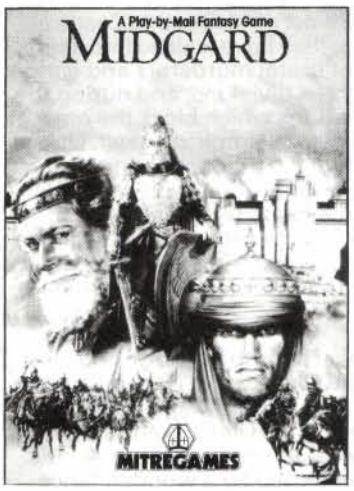

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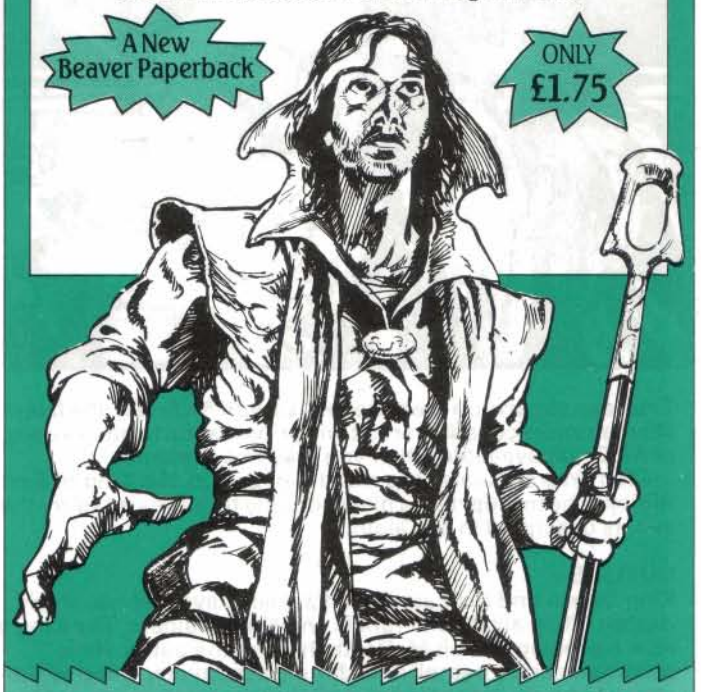

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glen woe

A scenario for Warhammer, by Richard Halliwell

First Witch. All hail, McDeath! Hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!

Second Witch. All hail, McDeath! Hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!

Third Witch. All hail, McDeath, that shalt be King hereafter!

First Witch. Hail, Banquo! Lesser than McDeath, and greater.

Second Witch: Not so happy, yet much happier.

Third Witch. Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none.
So all hail, McDeath and Banquo!

Banquo. [*Points at Witches*] Are you talking ta me, jimmys?

– from 'The Tragedy of McDeath'

This is an expansion scenario for use with *McDeath*, the latest *Warhammer* scenario pack: it will prove useful to have a copy of *McDeath* available when you play this scenario.

Glen Woe simulates the murder of Dunco, the King of East Albion. The murder takes place roughly three years before the events described in *McDeath*.

OUTLINE

King Dunco and the East Albion armies have just decisively beaten off an alliance of rebels and Norse raiders. The King is now travelling to visit McDeath, hero of the battle. He is accompanied by a small detachment of soldiers, Mergrey Calchoner (the court magician), and three loyal noblemen (Macduff, Ross and Angus).

McDeath, meanwhile, has met three witches who have predicted that he will become Thane of Cawdor and then King. McDeath steadfastly refused to believe this prophecy, when he received news that Cawdor had thrown in his lot with the rebels. After the rebellion was put down, the Thane was executed: the King gave the title to McDeath out of gratitude for his part in the victory. McDeath told his ambitious wife of the witches' prophesy, and she has now persuaded him to kill Dunco and seize the throne.

Dunco's entourage are breaking their journey in Glen Givett, a valley in the mountains to the west of McDeath's Castle at Runsinane. Unbeknown to them, they have walked into a trap. McDeath has recruited a gang of brutal murderers and a tribe of orcs. He has split them into three divisions, and during the night they have moved into positions which block the only exits from the glen. McDeath's plan is simplicity itself. One division will deploy across each of the roads; the murderers will then creep into the settlement where they will find and kill King Dunco. Any of the King's men who try to flee will run straight onto the swords of the waiting orcs. Troops will then be sent in to root out anyone who remains in the settlement. It is vitally important to McDeath that there are no survivors.

TERRAIN

Glen Givett is surrounded by sheer cliffs to the north and east, and impassable mountains to the south-west. The only routes out are via the roads to Runsinane, Iskergow and Balloch. Roughly at the centre of the valley is the Glen Givett settlement which consists of a couple of sod-houses and an inn. A little way to the south-east is a mill enclosed by a wooden fence. West and east of the settlement are two toll booths on the main Iskergow-Runsinane road. Three brooks converge in the glen and flow down towards the sea. The roads cross these at two small stone bridges.

LOCATIONS

Note that the building numbers are those used in the scenario pack – building **1** is a storehouse, and doesn't appear in this battle.

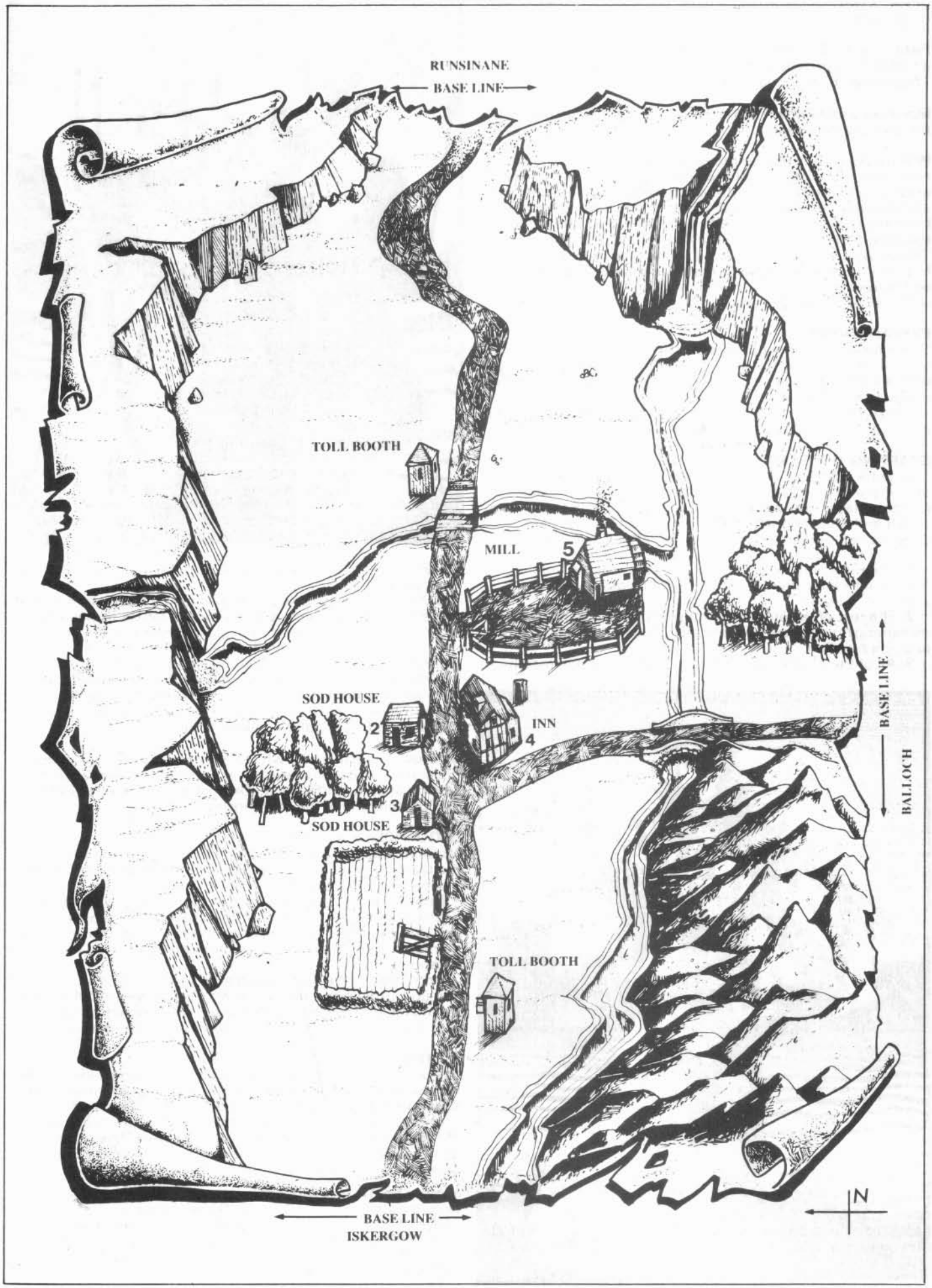
The Settlement

2. Sod house. Toughness: 6; Wounds: 5.
3. Sod house. Toughness: 6; Wounds: 5.
4. Inn. Toughness: 7; Wounds: 10.
5. Mill. Toughness: 7; Wounds: 5 per section. The mill is a two-storey building, each storey counts as a separate building section.

Toll Booths. Toughness: 7; Wounds: 4. The booths have solid timber doors which face towards the road; these are fitted with bolts on the inside. They have narrow archery slits on all four sides.

Bridges. The bridges are wide enough to take two figures abreast.

Brooks. All of the brooks in Glen Givett are fast flowing and deep. Crossing takes an entire turn, and there is a risk of falling. The player should roll a d6 for each model: if the result is anything but a 1 the model crosses safely. Otherwise the model slips, falls, and is carried away by the current. The game master should roll a d4; the model then suffers a single hit of attack strength equal to this result and is carried this number of inches downstream. Roll another d4. If the result is 1 or 2, the


RUNSINANE
BASE LINE
TOLL BOOTH
MILL
5
SOD HOUSE
2
INN
4
3
SOD HOUSE
TOLL BOOTH
BASE LINE
BALLOCH
BASE LINE
ISKERGOW
N

model is washed up on the far bank; 3 or 4 and it comes to rest on the near bank.

Field. The field to the west of the settlement is surrounded by a half-inch-high hedge which counts as soft cover. The gate is Toughness: 6, Wounds: 3, and is bolted.

Mountains and Cliffs. The mountains and cliffs surrounding the glen are impassable.

Woods. All woods reduce movement by half. Visibility is reduced to 2". Missile troops wishing to fire out of wooded areas must be standing at the wood's edge, and are counted as if in soft cover. Troops further than 2" into a wood and away from any enemy are assumed to be hidden, and, after consultation with the game master, may be removed from the table. Troops within 2" of the edge of a wood may only be assumed hidden if they spend an entire turn stationary. Their position will be revealed if they move or shoot, or if any enemy come within 6" of the wood's edge.

PREPARATIONS

Some time before the game is due to start the game master should take a photocopy of the battlefield map. Dunco's player will need this to mark positions and planned movements of the guards. Before the players assemble, the game master should write up command sheets for the two players using the information given here and in *McDeath*.

STARTING THE GAME

The game master gives the two sides their Command Sheets and answers any queries about the rules, the terrain etc. Dunco's player now writes down which troops are sleeping in which buildings and where the guards will be stationed. Dunco's deployment is subject to the following rules:

1. The King must be billeted alone in one of the buildings. No one else may share the building but a guard may be stationed outside.

2. The rest of the entourage may be quartered in any of the remaining houses, but no more than five models may occupy any one building.

3. All of the King's entourage have horses: these may be either in the field, the paddock behind the inn, or the mill enclosure.

4. Three of the entourage may be on guard duty; only one of these may be a nobleman. Mergrey will refuse to stay up all night, and cannot be used as a guard. Their starting positions must be clearly marked on the player's copy of the map. Guards may be ordered to remain stationary or to patrol. If they are ordered to patrol their circuit should be marked on the map with a dotted line; remember to mark the direction in which they will move. Guards may not be stationed or ordered to patrol within 12" of the table's edges.

McDeath's player, meanwhile, must split his troops into three divisions and assign one to cover each of the roads. Each division must be led either by McDeath, Lady McDeath or Banquo and contain one of the murderers.

SEQUENCE OF ACTION

McDeath deploys his troops along the three base lines, 2" into the table. He may now move the murderers while the other troops remain stationary.

Dunco's troops are placed on the table as and when they are seen by an enemy. Dunco cannot take command of his army until the alarm has been raised. It takes an entire turn after the alarm for them to dress, don armour and gather up their weapons.

According to the plan agreed prior to McDeath's army splitting up into divisions, the murderers must be sent into the settlement ahead of the rest of the troops. The remaining troops may not move until an alarm is raised or the murderers return.

VICTORY

It is unlikely that more than a couple of the King's entourage will survive; Dunco's death is more or less guaranteed. The schedule below allows the players to assess their relative performance, given that the outcome is almost pre-ordained. If McDeath scores 4 or more points he has won: if he scores between 1 and 3 points, the game is a draw: if he scores zero or less, Dunco's player can count himself the victor.

Victory Points for McDeath

Dunco slain	+6	Banquo slain	−2
McDeath slain	−6	If an enemy model escapes off table	−4
Lady McDeath slain	−4		

If any of the escaping enemy knew McDeath, Lady McDeath or Banquo were present −4

SPECIAL RULES

Visibility

The scenario takes place on a clear, moonlit night. Maximum visibility is as follows: moving model – 12"; stationary model – 6"; building – 36".

Alarms

Dunco's player cannot take command of his troops until an alarm has been raised. An alarm is raised the moment one of the murderers is spotted or fails to make a silent attack. If the murderers manage to kill Dunco and escape unnoticed the alarm will not be raised unless a guard spots one of McDeath's regiments, or until one of the regiments attacks a building.

Arcs of Vision

Because of poor visibility, models can only see things within a 90° arc to their front. (For an illustration of the 90° arc band see page 18 of Combat, Volume 1 of *Warhammer*.)

Murderers

A murderer approaching an enemy unseen, or attacking someone who is asleep, counts the opponent's Ws and I as 1. If the opponent is killed in the first round of combat assume the attack was silent, and that the victim didn't have chance to cry out and raise the alarm.

COMMAND SHEETS

The game master should write out command sheets using the information given below.

KING DUNCO'S ENTOURAGE

Dunco, King of East Albion

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	5	5	3	3	2	5	2	10	9	10	10

Dunco has a shield and chainmail armour, giving him a saving throw of 5 or 6, and a ½" movement penalty. He is armed with a sword and rides a warhorse.

Mergrey Calchoner, King Dunco's Court Magician
Magician; LVL3; CON:23.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	3	3	4	4	3	6	1	9	9	9	10

Mergrey does not wear armour and is armed only with a dagger. He can cast the following Battle Magic spells: *aura of resistance, fireball, mystic mist, smash, animate sword.*

Macduss, Ross and Angus, Noblemen

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	5	5	4	4	2	5	2	8	8	8	8

The nobles have shields and chainmail armour, giving them a saving throw of 5 or 6, and a movement penalty of ½". They are armed with swords, and ride warhorses.

Mounted Escort, 10 Soldiers

The soldiers have standard human characteristics. They carry shields, which confer a saving throw of 6, and are armed with swords. The soldiers may fight as a single regiment of 10 men or as two regiments of 5.

Commander's Brief

You are Dunco, King of East Albion. You have just scored a decisive, devastating victory over an army of invading Norsemen and East Albion rebels. The royal entourage is now en route to a victory celebration at the castle of your friend and kinsman, McDeath. You are spending the night at Glen Givett and should arrive at McDeath's Runsinane Castle by noon tomorrow. Although your escort is quite large and well-armed, some of the rebels are still at large: it would be a wise precaution to station guards before you retire for a night's well-earned rest.

McDEATH'S ORCS AND MURDERERS

McDeath, Thane of Cawdor

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	6	6	4	4	3	6	3	9	9	9	9

McDeath wears full plate armour, and carries a shield, giving a saving throw of 4, 5 or 6. There is also a movement penalty of 1" due to armour encumbrance. He is armed with a magic sword. The sword's magical attributes are *Will Power Drain, Resist Fire* and *Talking Weapon.*

Lady McDeath
Wizard; LVL1; CON:10.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	3	3	4	4	3	6	1	9	9	9	10

Lady McDeath does not wear armour. She is armed with a dagger. She is an illusionist magician and can cast the following spells: Battle Magic – *fireball*; Illusionist Magic – *bewilder foe, clone image, confound foe.*

Banquo, McDeath's Lieutenant

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	4	4	4	3	1	4	1*	7	7	7	7

Banquo is armed with a sword, and carries a shield, giving an armour saving throw of 6. He is subject to *Frenzy* and when frenzied makes a total of *four* attacks. These are two sword attacks, one headbutt attack, and one kick attack. Banquo headbutts and kicks using normal characteristics; there are no penalties for fighting unarmed.

The Three Murderers

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Int	Cl	WP
4	4	4	4	3	1	4	1	7	7	7	7

The murderers do not wear armour. They are armed with daggers and throwing knives.

Orc Tribe, 45 Warriors

The orcs have standard characteristics. They wear chain mail armour and carry shields, giving them a saving throw of 5 or 6, and a movement penalty of ½". 30 of them are armed with swords, 15 with bows and daggers. The orcs can be organised into any number of regiments in multiples of 5.

Commander's Brief

The three witches have predicted that you will become King of East Albion; their prophesies have proved correct so far. In order to fulfil the prophesy you are about to murder Dunco, the present monarch. Your army is split into three divisions: each division includes a skilled murderer, contracted to slay the king. You are personally in charge of one of the divisions; the other two are led by Lady McDeath, and Banquo, your lieutenant and best friend. Each division is blocking one of three escape routes from the glen. The prearranged plan is to send the murderers in first to find Dunco and kill him in his sleep. Anyone trying to escape from the Glen must be stopped; the whole royal retinue should then be wiped out. □

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A Referee's Guide to Thieves' Guilds in AD&D, by Olivier Legrand

The *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* rules only give very vague hints on how a Thieves' or Assassins' Guild functions in a fantasy city. This article was written to give referees and players various ideas and suggestions about the working and use of a criminal guild in their own fantasy campaign.

The Nature of a Thieves' Guild

The presence of a Thieves' Guild in a city-orientated campaign surely adds 'colour' to the setting. Moreover, it provides the imaginative referee with plenty of plots and adventure ideas. Members of a Guild can be used as interesting opponents or rivals for a party, especially if player character thieves are present.

Players and referees should not be misled by the word 'Guild'. A Thieves' Guild is by no means a mundane and official group, like a merchants' or craftsman's corporation, but is a secret and powerful criminal organization about which very little is known – apart from its existence. It wields great power in the underworld, and, to a lesser extent, over the whole city. It could loosely be described as a medieval Mafia.

Guild Membership

Not all thieves in a city will necessarily belong to the Guild; it depends very much on the nature of the thief. Muggers and petty filchers are unlikely to be involved but most burglars, 'locksmiths' and other specialized thieves are likely to be members of the Guild.

Any competent thief (ie a player character thief) arriving in town will usually be approached within 24 hours by a Guild representative, unless he takes special precautions to travel incognito. The Guild emissary will ask the character to join the ranks of the Guild: if he accepts, the character will be blindfolded and taken to a secret meeting place. There, the guildmaster – or one of his lieutenants – will make him sign an enlistment contract, establishing his duties and benefits as a Guild member. Should the thief try to double-cross or betray the Guild, the most likely result will be his elimination by some hired assassins.

If the character refuses to enter the Guild when first contacted, he'll be due for a rough time, especially if he's successful. In this case, the Guild will probably arrange his capture by the local militia, force him out of town or, at the very extreme, have him assassinated.

Members of the Thieves' Guild must swear an oath of secrecy and loyalty to the guildmaster and his lieutenants. They must pay 20% of all they steal to the Guild. Should a thief attempt to 'conceal' any illegal income, and this fact is discovered, he'll be 'warned'. A thief will be expelled from the Guild and driven out of town when he receives his third warning.

In addition to their own crimes, members may also participate in Guild jobs: top-class burglaries, kidnappings, and other shady operations engineered and co-ordinated by one of the Guild's lieutenants. Fifty percent of the total haul goes directly to the Guild; the other half is shared out equally between the participating Guild members.

Guild members should not expect their fellow thieves to pay for their own failure or carelessness: the Guild is quite unlikely to rescue captured members (except for Guild lieutenants or very worthy members caught while executing a Guild job). The Guild could well send assassins to murder an imprisoned thief to prevent him from making some embarrassing revelations under torture or interrogation. Careful, clever thieves will insure they are rarely caught, and can generally arrange their own escape. Captured thieves who manage to escape are generally ejected from the Guild, unless their escape took place before any serious interrogation could be made. In such a case, the thief concerned will not be permitted to take part in any important job for one month. Remember that 'a thief's prime tool is anonymity' (old thiefly saying).

Guild Lieutenants

Lieutenants are the direct assistants of the guildmaster. They are chosen by the guildmaster himself from among the cleverest and most skilful members. A Guild will typically have from four to twelve lieutenants, depending on the size of the town. Lieutenants act as middlemen between the guildmaster and the other Guild members. They are in charge of organising, and sometimes carrying out, Guild jobs. Each lieutenant is also given an assignment: this may range from controlling criminal activities in a particular town district (eg West Quarters, Merchants' Avenue, etc) to the supervision of a specific type of operation (such as burglaries, kidnappings, rackets, recruiting, rumour and information collecting, and so on).

When money goes to the Guild as a result of a Guild job (see *Guild Membership*), half of that amount is distributed equally between all the lieutenants. The remainder is then divided by two: one share is given to the guildmaster, and the other goes to the lieutenant who organized/commanded the job. For example, from a total haul of 2000gp, 1000gp are received by the Guild. If it has 5 lieutenants, the guildmaster will receive 250gp, the lieutenant who ran

the job will gain 350gp and each of the four remaining lieutenants will receive 100gp.

In the case of 'personal' jobs (see *Membership*), the 20% rake-off goes directly to the guildmaster.

The Guildmaster

The guildmaster is the central character of the whole organization. He delegates tasks to the lieutenants, and sometimes organizes extremely perilous or important Guild jobs himself (such as kidnapping a member of the nobility, or a raid on the local archmage's tower). Such a powerful person is unlikely to take personal risks when he can get others to do it for him, so the guildmaster will never actively take part in an operation except perhaps in an emergency. Guildmasters remain in 'office' until they die or decide to retire: they select their own successor from among their lieutenants. Should a master die before designating a successor, the result is usually a bloody and murderous war between the lieutenants' factions – with the winner emerging as the new guildmaster.

The identity of the guildmaster greatly affects the working of the organization. Most of the time, the guildmaster will be the best thief in town. He could, however, be something very different – such as a wealthy and influential noble or merchant leading a double life, using the Guild to satisfy private, political or financial business (in addition to its usual criminal activities). In this case, the guildmaster's true identity would only be known by his trusty lieutenants, and Guild members would simply know him as 'the Master', the 'Hooded One' or whatever.

In either situation, the guildmaster will be extremely well protected, and will seldom appear in front of members, preferring instead to act through his body of lieutenants in order to maintain an aura of mystery and secrecy. The guildmaster will always be a very crafty character, unlikely to make mistakes, and conducting his business with great judgement and experience. The main aspect of the guildmaster's personality profile is *power*. He should be an expert in the arts of stealth, treachery, deceit and diplomacy. These skills, combined with the exceptional resources in wealth and manpower available to him make the guildmaster a valuable ally or a deadly foe – depending on which side you're on. The guildmaster will be obeyed and respected in all the underworld. This does not mean he has to be feared – he could just be an efficient and popular leader, praised by the poorer townsfolk for being a permanent challenge to the authorities. On the other hand, if he is a cruel and ruthless man who extracts from the poor all the money they can save, his popularity will be rather low and he'll have to face the threats of riot and conspiracy. Most masters adopt a neutral attitude towards the populace, knowing that nothing can stop an angry mob, and that too many 'friends' of modest status can be a troublesome burden for the man who wants to rule and control.

Apprentices

Apprentices are young boys and girls trained by the Guild's instructors to become true thieves and attain full membership. They are recruited by lieutenants from among the cleverest street urchins and usually become full members after one or two years of apprenticeship. During this time they never participate in jobs, except for practice or for operations where extra manpower is needed. As shown in *Guild Membership* (above) it is not necessary to have been an apprentice in order to become a full member, though at least 50% of Guild members were once apprentices.

Instructors

Guild instructors are special members whose duty is to teach and train the apprentices. Instructors are generally thieves who have retired from their active career, either because of age or as a result of some injury. Nonetheless, instructors are vital to the Guild, as the skills and abilities of future members depend solely on their competence. Optionally, instructors could also train Guild members in specific skills, such as disguise, escapology, and acrobatics.

Specialists

A typical Thieves' Guild will maintain a small body of highly skilled specialists – including forgers, locksmiths, druggists, mechanicians, and even armourers. The number of Guild specialists should be kept low, as expert craftsmanship coupled with total trustworthiness is a rather rare occurrence. Ideally, a Guild should have one specialist per specific skill or knowledge field.

Lieutenants can obtain the services of Guild specialists free, but ordinary members wishing to use the specialist skills and knowledge for their own private business must pay (they will, however, get a reasonable discount). Guild specialists generally have a professional cover to ensure they have sufficient income. They also get an annual fee from the guildmaster which is dependent on their usefulness and success rate throughout the past year.

Spies, Informants and Contacts

The Guild will also have a vast network of spies and informants scattered throughout the city in the guise of common citizens, beggars, and prostitutes, or infiltrated into important organisations such as the Merchants' Guild, the royal palace, and the militia headquarters. These spies may be hired from the Assassins' Guild, supplied by another organization, or even schooled by special Guild instructors. Their duty is to report interesting rumours, facts and events to Guild contacts. Guild contacts are typically shop or innkeepers paid by the Guild to collect information from its spies, and to report them to a lieutenant. This two-link chain prevents direct dealing between spies and lieutenants, thus lessening complications in case the spy is uncovered.

Allies and Support

To be powerful and effective, the Thieves' Guild needs rich and influential friends (such as merchants, nobles, courtesans, officials, and high-ranking wizards), ready to help the Guild when serious financial or legal problems arise. These 'friends', however, are not necessarily motivated by friendship or ideological interests: blackmail and bribery are also excellent ways to acquire support. A crafty guildmaster will also have alliances with other powerful personalities of the underworld, such as rich madams, the leader of the beggars, the local Grandfather of Assassins, and ship captains interested in smuggling. These alliances are quite flexible and could well be broken in times of crisis.

Guild Headquarters

The location and type of Guild Headquarters is important. While a mansion stuffed with traps and secret doors appears attractive, a network of tunnels seem to be a more logical and interesting solution. Imagine a vast underground maze spanning the entire city, connecting with the sewers, and the taverns, brothels or casinos owned by the Guild. These tunnels could also lead to a secret meeting place where projects and decisions are debated by the guildmaster and his body of lieutenants. The residence of the guildmaster should be kept a secret, even from his lieutenants. This will mostly depend on the master's identity and personality. If he leads a double life, then the tunnels will probably connect to his regular home. If, on the other hand, he's a well-known criminal, he'll live in a well-concealed location protected by traps and trusty bodyguards. This could be anything from the basement or back premises of some unremarkable establishment to a sumptuous underground palace – or even to the catacombs of an abandoned temple.

The Guild will also own a number of buildings and warehouses to house instructors and apprentices, store stolen goods, or serve as caches for hunted members.

Feuds and Rivalries

Apart from the local authorities, a Thieves' Guild could have other powerful enemies – for instance, a competing criminal corporation, or a specially created branch of the Merchants' Guild which hires swordsmen and bodyguards to counteract the Thieves' Guild's activities. This element will certainly spice things up if some player characters belong to one of these rival groups.

The attitude of the Assassins' Guild towards the Thieves' Guild will range from friendly co-operation to total hostility. If you preferred, it could just be a specialized branch of the Thieves' Guild, although multiple (and potentially rival) criminal brotherhoods always add flavour to city campaigns. If you enjoy messing up your adventurers' lives with complications and treachery, you could also start feuds and intrigues between the different Guild lieutenants, with each faction plotting against the other to gain the master's favour or to overthrow him. This will result in some hot and exciting mob wars, with the player characters being caught in the crossfire. It will provide a refreshing change from the usual dungeon-crawling, and bring the thieves in your game to life. □

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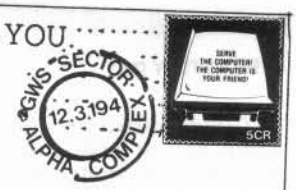

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THE COMPUTER IS YOUR FRIEND
THE COMPUTER IS GAME FOR A LAUGH

Besides the usual number of letters about sexism, young gamers et al, this month's mailbag has also contained a few letters congratulating me on my new position as Editor of this erudite publication. Thank you, thank you, thank you. I can promise you that the magazine will be heading in a new direction soon, but for the moment. . . .

Shirley Carbery, Stourbridge: Some of the male readers who replied to my letter seemed to have a mental instability in recognising the differences between reality and fantasy. They expressed the strange view that medieval role-playing games must be as authentic as possible, and as such women should hold subservient roles in keeping with their supposed position in society in the Middle Ages; in fact I was told I should be grateful women are even included. At the same time, to recreate this authentic atmosphere, elves, dwarfs, etc, are placed within their proper positions!

I hate to break the news to these male readers but elves, dwarfs, orcs, hobgoblins don't exist, have never existed (not even in medieval times) and never will. This attitude was exemplified by the rather naïve and chauvinistic views of writers like D Green in *WD74* (I didn't realise feminism was a dirty word, Mr Green) and S Evans in *WD73*.

The whole game set-up is pure fantasy; I don't want to hear any more rubbish concerning authenticity, and in my opinion it's foolish to think that you could actually achieve any realism.

D G Bell, North Kelsey: The letter from Miss Carbery has filled your letters page with more opinionated ignorance than any other I can recall. People have claimed the support of history, fantasy fiction, and game design in their attempts to discount Miss Carbery's complaint. Despite all this, I cannot see any reason not to support her.

History certainly does not deny the presence of women warriors. It is, quite likely, true that (male) historians have tended to ignore the many women who have taken an open and active part in politics and war. It isn't really relevant that the vast majority of women were treated very badly by modern standards, as when we talk about characters in games we are already talking about exceptional people. Besides that, working magic, polytheism, and intelligent non-human mortals would turn the superstitious, Christian, purely human medieval society of historical Europe into something totally different.

Some of your readers will not like the idea that Robert E Howard and John Norman are not the only writers of fantasy. Between that extreme and that of the far-feminists there are a lot of writers who create plausible women filling every niche in the fantasy character range.

Finally there is the game design argument. There are people playing RPGs today who don't realise that they can produce their own scenarios, think that the designer's words are writ in flame imperishable, and probably play *D&D* because it has the most garish pictures on the module covers. There used to be a lot said about the creative element in role-playing games: now it seems to have almost been forgotten. In the end, the rules are one person's interpretation of a sub-created reality. Any resemblance between characters in any role-playing game and any persons alive or undead is purely coincidental.

Shirley Carbery: In reply to S Evans's eloquently written letter in *WD73* as to why I persist in buying this magazine if I object to the soft porn images of women; does Mr Evans expect me to live like a hermit?! I buy this magazine because I want to find out more concerning RPGs; just as when I buy a newspaper to read the news, I am affronted by pictures of naked women. Everywhere I look, Mr Evans, my femininity is insulted – it won't do any good just to run and hide.

Simon Polley, Leeds: If you really are a nudie mag, shouldn't you be called *Camera Weekly* like all the rest?

Funny you should mention that, one of the forthcoming changes is the title. . . .

Alan Bishop, Herne Bay: Oh boy! At the risk of becoming the target of all 'regular' *WD* scribes, I wish to appeal to the Spirit of Fence-Sitting Peace-Lovers. Okay, so sexism and the age war are major issues (especially if the reader is a ten-year old female RPGer), but due to the very nature of these subjects, even after months of discussion (which has developed into a general gripe, including backstabbing and 'raking-up-old-quotes-and-using-the-same-arguments'), nobody has changes their views (go on, someone prove me wrong, please!).

And so, what's the point? Can't we have some letters about less volatile, non-serious subjects? What ever happened to letters about articles and scenarios in *WD*?

You mean these ones . . . ?

Jon Gurney, Twickenham: Many thanks for publishing *Gamesmanship* by Martin Hytch in *WD75*. It will become required reading for players in my campaign.

I completely agree with what he says about the need to keep the sense of wonder present in *AD&D*, and to avoid the game degenerating into a mathematical system with some fancy labels attached. It is important to make use of the creativity of the group – the players giving life to their characters and the DM designing a believable environment for them. (It improves the 'reality' of a campaign if there is detailed geography and economic and political system in which the characters have places. They become inhabitants of a world rather than ceasing to exist whenever they leave the dungeon.) Players should be encouraged to develop their characters into individuals, possibly quite different from their own personalities.

I do see a problem, however, in trying to restrict players reading *AD&D* literature. It can lead to a sort of elitism whereby the players are always bound by the will of the DM. Players will naturally be curious about the working of the game and some will want to try their hands at DMing themselves. How can you justify stopping them from doing what you do all the time yourself?

Dave Morris, London: *Gamesmanship* was the best thing in *WD75*, though it's kind of depressing that most people need to be told this kind of thing at all. I'd like to see more games companies dividing their RPG rules into game mechanics and game reality sections, so the GM can take care of the numbers and stats while the players enjoy the fantasy.

To add my ha'pennyworth to Martin Hytch's many useful suggestions, I always think that generic names for magic items are absurd. *Players* might classify the item the party's just found as a *Ring of Protection* or whatever, but the typical *character's* understanding should be along the lines of 'this must be the vambrace of Sigurd Ironeyes, the legendary Mercanian reaver of whom it's said he could only be harmed by fire and love. . . .' The generic labels are just there for the GM's convenience.

Stuart Cox, Horley: What else can I say but a humble 'thank you', Pete Tamlyn. *How to Save the Universe* was an extremely well thought out article and hopefully one which would convert the polemic outburst from Matthew Carrington. Perhaps he and his ilk should take time to read these comics that spawned Superhero role-playing. Admittedly some are tedious, but any who venture to read Batman, Daredevil, and X-Men will find complex, deep, fulfilling stories. I suspect those expecting 'Boffs' and 'Biffs' will be surprised. Role-playing is for role-players whatever the genre of the game. Be it Superheroes or dragon-vanquishing warriors it takes *skill* to succeed.

Frederic Wayland, Dublin: Matthew Carrington is not the only person who dislikes Superhero rolegames, and Pete Tamlyn's article has not changed my views. Are we role-playing or hero-playing? Role-playing includes historical rolegames designed to give the player the feel of another time and land. What was believed in is effectively real, which explains magic and the like, never Superheroes. For this reason, role-playing business,

politics and travel of any time or land can be more exciting and relevant than impossible heroes.

I, and I hope most people, play rolegames for experience and interaction with the milieu. For this to happen, player characters need to be normal humans who develop normal skills in the normal way, and advance through the use of their skill, wits and good fortune. Rolegames allow player characters to make mistakes, die, have accidents and to learn from them. Any true novel will, likewise, give an experience of the world it explores.

Tim Norman, North Ascot: A lot of people seem to be taking their opinions of comics and thus the games from the old (dana-nana-nana-nana) Batman! series and film. Now let's get one thing straight. Batman was a (semi-cult) COMEDY. It exaggerated many of the conventions that were evident in the comics at the time, but the 'Biff, Oof, Pow!' routine and the 'Holy aerial cupcakes' bit were designed to be funny, laughable, even silly. Comics weren't too much like that then, and they're certainly not like that now.

Dave Morris: *The Heart of the Dark* looks good – and no stats either which is an intriguing departure. So how about trying the same idea with a (high) fantasy scenario?

Did someone mention High Fantasy?

Dave Langford, Reading: Can it be that Tony Allen didn't read my review? I ask this since all his comments seem to avoid the point: that high fantasy in a high style is difficult to bring off. All reviewing is subjective. Subjectively, I don't think *Sceptre Mortal* came off. In case any readers were so silly as to read this as a blanket condemnation of high fantasy, I carefully listed five of many authors whose efforts I thought *did* succeed. Please, *WD*, get some subscribers who read the reviews properly. . . .

As the shock and heat waves from the Twilight 2000 *argument pass gently by, the firestorm that is review style and content continues to consume the letters page.*

Stephen Muddiman, Market Rasen: I should like to say that I disagree totally with Andrew Young's letter (*WD73*): a game is more than the rules, and a reviewer should give the flavour of the game as much as the rules system. If that flavour happens to be distasteful then I see nothing wrong with the reviewer saying that he, personally, found it so. So at least all us 'pseudo-socialists' (and real ones too) together with all the rest of the pinkos and commies can go and buy a game we would enjoy. Also, I don't know how Mr Young plays these games, but I always find that a great deal of emotional involvement is necessary and vital to the making of a good game. So it would be impossible for a reviewer to prevent his personal feelings interfering. I would be interested to see how Mr Young would enjoy a game entitled 'Incest 2000' – no matter how good its game system!

Naturally when pinko, commie subversives are mentioned one thinks immediately about fanzine editors. . . .

James Wallis, Sound & Fury Magazine: Fanzines are not 'boring, boring, boring'. Because they're not tied to a major games designer with a chain of shops, they *can* be objective in their reviews. If something stinks, they'll say so: they don't have to worry about losing advertising from that client. True, some fanzines are hardware shops, some are no better than fanclub newsletters, and some are produced just to get into the hobby 'elite' (*What hobby 'elite'? –Ed*), but there are one or two which try to cut through the mental grease and grime and get to the root of the problems. The point about fanzines is that the buyer can find a style he likes and stick to it.

Rich Mumford, Harrogate: Steve Gilham is a prat. All fanzines are like *SEWARS* are they? Well, there you have it from an obvious expert in the field; forget your reviews because this guy is obviously a fandom demi-god – listen to him. Steve Gilham obviously hasn't bought a fanzine for a very long time because (a) he would have realised that the current trend is against hardware, (b) all the hobby elite (*? –Ed*) are now working for *WD*, and (c) that *Acolyte* and *Dragonlords* have both folded.

For readers' information, the 'hobby elite' is an organisation that exists only in the imaginations of those who do not consider themselves members but who would like to be included as such. Daft, isn't it?!

James Wallis: I don't think much of *WD* at the moment, but hopefully the new Marsh broom will sweep away a lot of the filth.

No filth. Honest, decent, and true. . . .

Mo Holkar, Southampton: I am writing to complain about a disturbing trend in recent issues of *White Dwarf*. In *WD74* we have an article covering two pages on what is no doubt a very interesting game, *Superpower*, the latest offering from *Games Workshop*. In *WD73*, two pages on *Warrior Knights*, another non-role-playing boardgame – produced by *Games Workshop*. And in *WD72* there were two pages on an expansion set for *Talisman* – no prizes for guessing which wonderful company makes that game. Now I know that *WD* is owned by *GW*, but at least in the old days you used to pretend to be fairly objective; at the moment you appear to be turning into a *Games Workshop* house mag.

It might be hoped that with the passing of Livingstone this will stop, though frankly I doubt it; I hadn't been at all impressed with Ian Marsh's rather inane letters page comments.

Do you mean me? You surely do!

Mo Holkar: On the plus side, the *Trollmarsh* scenario in *WD74* was brilliant, well above usual standards. And the new *News* page is looking as though it might be even better than the old (pre-*53*) version.

Close scrutiny of Terror at Trollmarsh *revealed some interesting facts.*

Andrew Meek, Burgess Hill: The Philistines have discovered subtlety! This revelation is proven by the insult given to the great and brilliant Marillion in *Terror at Trollmarsh*. I for one did not actually want to see one of my favourite groups derided by the 'complete rubbish', by the 'infernal nuisances' Peter and Janet Vialls (doubtless actually Viles). In future can this pair keep their lack of good taste to themselves?

Letters about generic scenarios continue to trickle in. . . .

Roger Musson, Edinburgh: I think Alex Tingle and Mark Rogers underrate or misunderstand the virtues of generic scenarios. Firstly, I doubt that 'plenty' of books, comics or films provide easily adaptable scenarios. More often than not they hinge upon such specialised characters or settings that they will not easily fit into any pre-existing FRP campaign. And frequently they rely on creaky plot devices that work all right when the author is in sole control, but would never be acceptable in a FRP game.

Secondly, it is certainly not true that a generic scenario is just a system scenario with the stats removed. A *D&D* scenario that made heavy use of clerical or druidical skills would never make a generic scenario insomuch as many FRP systems do not feature clerical or druidical classes.

Thirdly, as far as using scenarios in a campaign setting goes, most DMs are going to have to do a conversion exercise anyway – reconciling the scenario background with the campaign background, and adapting the difficulty of the scenario according to the current strength of the player characters.

Which brings me to my main point. I have no objection to seeing scenarios published in any system from *D&D* to *Powers & Perils*. What I would like to see is more scenarios that are generic in nature, rather than in presentation, and that can be easily adapted to any other system because they do not rely heavily on the mechanics of any other system. In particular, I should like to see an end to this 'suitable for 6-8 characters level 4-7' business. I want to see scenarios suitable for *any* characters.

My comment that many generic scenarios are simply system-tied adventures without the stats was *actually based on the fact that if a stat-less scenario was strongly cleric-oriented (say), then it would show in the nature of the adventure. Otherwise, I think I can generally agree with your points.*

And for our closing letter this issue. . .

Peter Gilboy, Basingstoke: I must say that when people think we are devil worshippers, pictures like the one on the cover of issue *75* can only reinforce their views. It is the most disgusting thing I have ever seen since someone took a picture of the editorial team at *White Dwarf*.

That was *the editorial team of* WD! □

CAPED CRUSADERS

Running Golden Heroes Campaigns, by Pete Tamlyn

One of the best things about the *Golden Heroes* game is the way in which you are encouraged, through rules, words and deeds, to use the system for running campaign-style games rather than one-off scenarios. I have always been a fan of campaign games: my argument is that you can become far more familiar with your character, and get far more out of the role-playing experience, if this character is one that you have lived with over several interconnected adventures, rather than a playing piece that is trotted out for individual scenarios. Nevertheless I know that there are many role-players who do not play in campaigns, and even some who are so horrified by the amount of work that seems to be involved that they do not believe that anyone would be so daft as to actually run one. Fear not, it is not as hard as it might seem, and since *Golden Heroes* puts so much effort into persuading you to play campaigns, what better system to choose to explain how to go about it.

The essence of a campaign-style game is that the players keep the same characters for each adventure, and that the game master links things together by using the same world and providing a time frame for the adventures. The overall effect is something like a long-running TV series. Some campaigns end up rather like *The A-Team* where each adventure (episode) is complete in itself and nothing much is known about what happens in between. The better ones, however, are closer to *Dynasty* or *Dallas* in that each episode is also part of a continuing story. One of the things about soaps that makes them so addictive is that there are always several storylines going on at once, and there is no obvious end. Of course you cannot model role-playing campaigns directly on soaps because you want each adventure to come to some sort of conclusion at the end of a playing session, rather than stop just as things get exciting as a TV programme would. However, if you link things together by involving the players in things other than adventuring, and you try to leave a few loose ends hanging at the end of each scenario, then you will find that the players role-play much better and keep coming back to find out what happens next. Probably the best analogy is the style of comic-writing pioneered by Stan Lee at *Marvel*, which makes Superhero rolegames ideal for campaigns.

Life, The Universe and Everything

One of the most important things that Stan did with *Marvel* was to have all of the comics set in an identifiable Marvel Universe. This gave a consistent background to the stories, and a sense that something was happening in the world outside the narrow confines of an individual story in a comic. Also, he based that universe on contemporary America. Most readers find this a lot easier to relate to than a completely imaginary universe, and it also means that the writers can use real world events as well as events in other comics to increase the sense of depth that the stories have. Finally Stan used the soap opera idea of the continuing narrative – what happened in yesterday's story will affect what happens in subsequent ones. *Marvel*'s main rivals, *DC*, used to pay much less attention to such things as consistency and continuity, which is one of the major reasons that *Marvel* overtook them in popularity.

Our *Golden Heroes* campaign should take a leaf or two out of *Marvel*'s book, and our first requirement is, therefore, to create a *Golden Heroes* Universe. You could, if you wanted, simply use the *Marvel* or *DC* worlds (though you might be advised to wait until *DC* finish rationalising their hugely complicated universe before using it). However, there are other games available or on the way that already do that, so the material that you will find in the *Golden Heroes* game and any accessory packs will be for *GH*'s own world. Besides, *Marvel* and *DC* stories are based largely in America whereas *GH* is a British game designed by British people and played, at least in the short term, largely by British players. One of the nice things about Superhero games is that you can set them in the real world in modern times, and that does away with a large amount of the work needed to design and detail your campaign world. OK, so you might have one or two players who want to play The Batsman and live in Botham City, but my advice is that if you live in Britain, set the game in Britain.

Integrating the Heroes

Having got a basis for our campaign world (and from here on I will be assuming that the campaign is to be set in Britain) next we have to think how the presence of superpowered characters will affect it, and what changes we intend to make. In other games it is often advisable to deviate from your source of inspiration because of the danger imposed by players who might know more about the world than you do. (Imagine trying to run a Middle-earth game with players who know Tolkien inside out!) However, with a game set in your own country in modern times, chances are you will know just as much about it as anyone else, or at least can get the information very easily. In my *Golden Heroes* campaign I have stuck as closely as possible to contemporary Britain, making changes due to the existence of superpowered characters only where necessary, and advancing the date by a year to avoid having my plots tied too closely to actual news stories.

Using a contemporary society in this way gives you a huge amount of background material to work with, and presents vast numbers of possibilities for developing plotlines. You don't need to agonise about who is in charge of the country and what their policies will be; you just have to imagine what Margaret Thatcher and Douglas Hurd would make of Superheroes. And you have a huge supporting cast of public figures to use. For example, in my game one of the heroes was invited to appear on the Terry Wogan show!

In addition to this you can bring in a few characters from fictional material set in the same society. No streetwise London hero worth his salt can get away without knowing Arthur Daley; and it may well provide a good deal of amusement during a game to have the players find out that the building the villains have just levelled was in fact the Crossroads Motel. If you are really keen on the science fiction aspect of *Golden Heroes* then your players would doubtless be well advised not to change into costume in any police telephone boxes.

Still, that's enough of the good ideas for the moment, (after all, my players could be reading this). Some changes have to be made and we need to consider what they might be. The most obvious one is the question of government relations with the heroes. There are already two official organisations, DICE and SOLO, which liaise between the authorities and superpowered characters but it is quite likely that the government will want to have its own superteam. Masked crimefighters are all very well, but a government is just as likely to want superpowered secret service agents. Where do MI5 and MI6 fit into all this?

Another question to consider is how the government attempts to deal with superpowered crime. DICE has presumably been set up to try to deal with this sort of thing, but what do they do with

the villains once they have caught them? Is there a special maximum security wing at Dartmoor, or has a new prison been built somewhere in the highlands of Scotland? Are there any new laws that might be passed to deal with the activities of superpowered beings, and do insurance companies pay up if your home is wrecked by an exchange of energy bolts? If aliens really do visit the Earth, does the government admit to the existence of UFOs and, if so, what do they claim to be doing about it?

Villainous Behavior

On the subject of villains we need to consider how criminals who are currently newsworthy would be affected by superpowered aid. What if the IRA had a superpowered ally? Do the Russians use superpowered spies? Could the Libyans pay supervillains to commit acts of terrorism on their behalf? If you want to use familiar bad guys then you will have to beef them up a bit or the players will find them far too easy to beat.

Finally we need to consider where the supplies of high tech equipment used by superpowered people come from. It would, I think, be quite possible to use existing multinational companies such as *IBM* but such organisations tend to be rather dull and boring. A more entertaining game would probably result from having most of the player involvement with smaller, highly innovative companies run by colourful characters like Sir Clive Sinclair. If there were Superheroes about I'm sure that Sir Clive would be first in the field with cut-price build-it-yourself cybernetic combat armour! Using small companies like this has the added advantage that they are prone to running into financial difficulties which you can turn into a plot ideas by having them fall foul of a rich international crime syndicate.

Making Waves

Having got a world to set our campaign in we next need to look at ways of developing plotlines for adventures. As I explained earlier, a campaign will work best if each individual scenario seems to be part of a continuing narrative. As the lives of the player characters progress they may pick up on the early warning signs as long term plots begin to unfold, and they will certainly suffer the consequences of their earlier actions. Presenting a campaign in this manner rather than as a series of unconnected encounters does require a certain amount of planning and record keeping, but the results can be well worth it.

Fortunately *Golden Heroes* provides several useful features which aid in the generation of long term plots. The most obvious of these is the rationale which players are required to write when they generate their characters. In producing a rationale a player will almost certainly give you several ideas for future adventures, by writing into it people his character has met, comments about his personality, and so on. In effect, each character comes complete with his own microcosm of background that can grow and develop with him as the campaign progresses. I find it useful to go through a similar rationale generation process for every villain that I invent, as the need to explain the character's origin often supplies sufficient inspiration for me to generate new plot ideas, as well as meaning that the bad guy is a much more rounded and believable character when he finally gets into play.

Another helpful facet of the *Golden Heroes* game is that the scenarios available for it are produced with campaign style play in mind. Some common threads (DICE, for example) crop up regularly, and you will find advice in the scenario booklet not only on how to run the adventure in question, but also how to adapt it to your own campaign and what future events may arise from what happens during play. *Legacy of Eagles* is additionally helpful in that it was deliberately designed to help a group of players just starting out as a super-team.

Building on what happens during scenarios that you run is an important part of creating a successful campaign. It may seem a bit of a drag at the time, but making a few notes as play progresses as to which NPCs got on very well or very badly with which players can help a lot with maintaining an air of consistency. With the whole game to run it is easy to forget that player A and villain X loathed each other on sight, but you can be sure that A will remember X and the game will seem a lot more believable to him if X also remembers their enmity and reacts accordingly next time they meet.

In addition a long-term plot can quite often grow spontaneously simply as a result of following up the implications of what happens during play. Suppose grateful aliens present the planet Earth with a beautiful crystal as a result of the help your players give them. Obviously the crystal will be put on display, and inevitably someone will try to steal it. In fleeing the pursuing heroes the villain could perhaps drop the crystal into impenetrable jungle where it is found by a lost civilisation ruled over by magician-priests. Before the players manage to recover the crystal the priests discover it has magical properties. They use these to attack beings in another dimension who, naturally, decide to attack Earth in order to destroy the crystal. And so on. Try to keep your options open by ensuring that there are always a few loose threads at the end of each adventure.

The Plot Thickens

Something else that you should do for each scenario you run is build on the background that you supply for it. Perhaps you do this anyway for scenarios you write yourself, but commercially produced material may not have room to cover everything in depth. For example, *Legacy of Eagles* introduces the long lost EAGLEs team of Golden Heroes who were active in the 1950s and 60s. The scenario booklet suggests a possible line-up for the EAGLEs but gives very little detail about any of them except Protector and Micron (who figure in the scenario). When I ran *Legacy* in my own campaign I not only invented my own EAGLEs team but also wrote up some of their history (throwing in a few asides, such as mentioning how much Harold Wilson loved having his picture taken with them, in order to add a bit more colour). I had other members of the team survive (or at least suggested that they might have done), one of

whom has since joined the players' team. This gives me a moderately powerful and experienced NPC that I can use to help the players when they are stuck.

Of course, if you are going to be using long-term plots in your campaign then it will be necessary for you to plan ahead. Fortunately the 'good shall triumph' ethos of the genre means that you can rely much more on knowing the outcome of the scenarios in advance. The details will be more difficult to predict, but you should have a good idea of where the player characters will be and when. With the aid of a desk diary (try looking around for one in midsummer when places like W H Smith are often selling the current year's diaries off at ridiculous prices) you should be able to plan out the various plotlines a few months of game time in advance. Knowing which scenarios will be coming up you can then turn them into long term plots by inserting references to them in current adventures. Prestige scientific projects can be mentioned in news broadcasts whilst they are under development; mercenary supervillains can be sprung from jail a few weeks before they are required by the criminal mastermind; vital components for a mad genius's latest device can be stolen; street contacts can pass on rumours, and so on. Dropping clues concerning forthcoming scenarios like this has the added advantages that it makes both current and future scenarios more challenging for the players because they have to sort out which of the clues they get are immediately relevant, and have to remember information from one gaming session to the next.

That Was The Week That Was

One final trick that is well worth using because it does so much to generate atmosphere for your campaign is to run a campaign newsletter. The activities of various Superheroes will inevitably be splashed across the front pages of the daily press, and the heroes will be dogged by photographers and camera crews whenever they appear in public. Issuing a regular newsletter full of excerpts from papers and TV reports concerning the activities of your players will make them much more aware of the world in which they live, and of their responsibilities to the general public. It also gives you a chance to have a lot of fun writing pastiches of the national newspapers. As an example, I will cite a few extracts from the newsletter of my own campaign.

To begin with the players were totally unknown, but one of them elected to do a lot of patrolling and therefore came to the attention of the press very quickly. I thought that the *Sun* would be the first paper to realise the potential of the Golden Heroes, and would quickly adopt the character in its usual, bombastic style:

'She's at it again! Yes, it's that girl again. The Soaraway Sun's own superheroine, Virago, has foiled another daring robbery. This time a million pound jewellery snatch in sparkling Hatton Garden. Our reporters were quickly on the scene and managed to snatch these close-up pictures of the lovely lady. We even managed to snatch a few words with her before she slipped away to continue her fight against crime. And do you know what? She even made her own costume. What a gal!'

The Daily Telegraph would probably hedge its bets to begin with. Happy to have someone fighting crime but wary of endorsing mutants or aliens, it would keep a close eye on what the government was saying, using the opportunity to score a few political points as well:

'Prime Minister's Question Time yesterday was given over largely to questions from both sides of the House on the subject of superpowered vigilantes. For the opposition Barry Sproat MP asked whether the Prime Minister, having destroyed most other national institutions, now intended to privatise the Police Force and put the safety of Britain's citizens in the hands of whatever bizarrely costumed individuals 'the market' might throw up. Mrs Thatcher countered that the power of Citizen's Arrest had long been an important part of our legal traditions and that she saw no need to scrap the system just because some enterprising people were actually exercising their power. From the Government benches the Honourable Michael Harman MP inquired whether the Prime Minister has any plans to reform the EAGLEs Superhero team which had been so successful in the 50s and 60s. Somewhat to the dismay of the wetter end of the Tory benches, Mrs Thatcher commented that, whilst a lot of what Mr Macmillan's government had done was very well intentioned, she felt that many of its achievements could have been brought about much more cheaply by use of market forces. Dr David Owen also attempted to contribute to the debate but his comments were lost amidst cries of derision from both sides of the House.'

The Guardian, I thought, would be worried about the effect of Golden Heroes on civil liberties, and its reports would be punctuated with the usual typesetting errors:

'Concern over the growing number of superpowered individuals in Britain mounted yesterday after the morning's pitched battle between the army, a group of costumed vigilantes and a mysterious, armoured a mysterious, armoured figure in central London. The National Council for Civil Liberties is to press the Government to take urgent action to pass legislation to protect ordinary citizens from the dangers that such paranormal beings pose. At present both the Goverment and DICE, the EEC-funded anti-terrorist paramilitary group, are refusing to comment on either yesterday's battle, the mysterious kidnap and rescue of Italian actress, Lola Novana, 28, or the large number of reported sightings of a UFO near Guildford yesterday evening.'

That should be enough to give you the flavour of a newsletter. With any luck you will soon find your players vying for the best press coverage. After all, we all like to see our names in the papers, don't we? □

Pete Tamlyn is the author of Games Workshop's *latest* Golden Heroes *adventure pack*, The Lancelot Caper.

GOODEVENING, OR IF YOU'RE WATCHING ME ON VIDEO, GOOD TAPE-COUNT.

SINCE THE ALIEN DEMONSTRATIONS AND ALIEN OUTCRIES OF THE **REV. DR. MARTIAN LUTHUR KRULL**, EXPLOITATION OF "FELLOW BEINGS" HAS BEEN PROHIBITED IN ALL BUT THE MOST TOTALLY XENOPHOBIC SYSTEMS, SUCH AS THE SOLAR SYSTEM **BUDD**.

THIS HAS MEANT A BIG BOOM IN THE NEED FOR REAL MONSTERS TO PLAY THEMSELVES. A FORERUNNER IN THIS FIELD IS **G'HARR THE FLESH-RENDER**, OR **CHRIS** TO HIS FRIENDS.

I CAUGHT UP WITH CHRIS ON LOCATION, WORKING ON HIS LATEST FILM, "**TITAN FIND II**", OR AS I PREFER TO SAY AND YOU MAY DISAGREE WITH ME AND WHO I AM TO SAY YOU'RE WRONG, **A PAIR OF KNOCKERS**.

IT WAS A RETURN TO THE ROLE THAT HAD MADE HIM FAMOUS, THAT OF THE BUG-EYED BEASTIE WITH LONG POINTY TEETH.

I ASKED CHRIS ABOUT HIS FIRST FILM, "**ALIEN**," AND ABOUT HOW IT FELT WORKING WITH HUMANS, AND **RIDLEY SCOTT**:

CHRIS: TERRIBLE! (LAUGHS) NO SERIOUSLY. THERE'S AN OLD HOLLYWORLD SAYING: "NEVER WORK WITH HUMANS OR TRIBBLES". YAH. BUT THEY WERE OKAH. AND PIDDLY—

BAZZA: RIDLEY SCOTT.

CHRIS: YAH, "PLOPPY", HE WAS JUST WONDERFUL - HE LIT ME BEAUTIFULLY.

BAZZA: AND OFCOURSE THERE WAS THE GORGEOUS **SIGOUENEY WEAVER** AND THE NOT-SO GORGEOUS, UNLESS YOU'RE A BIT LIKE THAT AND WHO AM I TO DOUBT YOUR PREFERENCE ALTHOUGH I HAVE NONE ABUT YOU MAY HAVE, **JOHN HURT**.

CHRIS: YAH.

BAZZA: CHRISSIE, OLD CHUM, OLDMATE, YOU PLAYED A BACTERIUM IN "**THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN**". DIDN'T YOU FIND THAT ROLE A LITTLE, (LAUGHS) LIMITING?

CHRIS: NO, NOT AT ALL. IT WAS VALUABLE EXPERIENCE. YOU GET A WHOLE NEW OUTLOOK ON LIFE WHEN YOU'RE ONLY 2 NMETERS ACROSS.

BAZZA: IN JOHN CARPENTER'S "**THE THING**" YOU GOT TO DISPLAY, AND YOU MAY DISAGREE WITH ME, AND WHY NOT, BECAUSE I AM ONLY HUMAN AND I DON'T PRETEND TO BE GOD, YOUR TALENTS TO THEIR FULLEST.

CHRIS: NO, NOT REALLY. AN INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE AT **ILM**, SOMETHING ABOUT NON-UNION MEMBERS DOING FEATS OF NON-MECHANICAL SPECIAL EFFECTS AND MAKE-UP MEANT I WAS DOUBLED FOR THE MOST PART BY A LATEX FOAM PUPPET.

BAZZA: IN "**THE BEAST THAT LEAPS OUT FROM BEHIND**," YOU ARE CREDITED WITH INJECTING HUMOUR INTO THE ROLE.

CHRIS: OH YAH, THE "MADDROOLING BABY KICKER AND INTESTINE GOBBLER". YAH, WELL STEVE AND I THOUGHT IT WAS A BIT HEAVY, SO WE LIGHTENED IT.

BAZZA: AND THE RED NOSE WAS YOUR IDEA WAS IT?

CHRIS: YAH.

BAZZA: LOVELY, AND AFTER THIS?

CHRIS: I THINK I'LL BECOME PRESIDENT! (LAUGHS) NO SERIOUSLY. I SEE MYSELF DOING THEATRE. I'M ALREADY SIGNED UP TO DO **LEAR** AT THE **NATIONAL**, LOTS OF TEETH AND SLIME AND LASERS GOING OFF... AND MAYBE A BOOK ON MYSELF; "FROM THE PRIMEVAL SOUP TO ME."

BAZZA: CHRIS THE MONSTER, THANK YOU.

CHRIS: MY PLEASURE BAZZA.

(WE REGRET THE LOSS OF YOUR TRAVELLERS EPISODE, WHICH WILL RETURN AGAIN AT ITS REGULAR TIME OF 22 DAYS INTO THE MONTH. UNTIL THEN, HERE IS SOME MUSIC...)

"Duh" Duh Dooh... Doot Doot Duh...
Dooh Dooh Dooooh.....

CASTLE IN THE WIND

An AD&D scenario for 5th-8th level characters, by Venetia Lee, with Paul Stamforth

A sky castle – a magical impossibility – is adrift in the wind. Its gardens are slowly withering, the hippogriffs grow restive, and the Queen calls for fires to be lit when none have been needed before. The first battle has been fought for possession of this wonder, and the adversary forced to flee, but not defeated – for he stole that which was without price. The Queen searches her mirrors for a champion but time is short – a common adversary is already making plans.

BACKGROUND

Geography

The scenario is set in the land of Chyoxus (*Map 1*). The adventure begins on the caravan road in the Southern desert, above which the Sky Castle is drifting. The search follows this road to the pre-desert where a little scrub vegetation grows, and nomads wonder with flocks of sheep and camels. Nearer still to the mountains there are cultivated fields, and lines of vertical shafts mark the passage of underground canals. Finally the search leads to the oasis town of Marutash and an army camp in the nearby foothills. The curious flat-topped Mount Chyoxus dominates the surrounding scenery.

Culture

The cultural setting is Persian in a broad sense. It corresponds to no particular time or place but is decidedly pre-Islamic (indeed, they have not yet even mastered the art of dome building). The land is rich but its hold on wealth is precarious, and depends mainly on the fragile irrigation system and the fluctuations of international trade. Hence the bureaucracy is all powerful, and efficient – even when corrupt. It has survived changes of rulers – and even changes of dynasty – intact.

Women are excluded from much of public life, but are not without influence. Those of the upper classes are hedged about with restrictions: they are almost unable to speak to any man outside the family, although they are not forced into complete seclusion. Female player characters of more liberal cultures are not expected to follow the same customs providing they remain modest, and, indeed, may have the best of both worlds, since they may speak to everyone.

Finally this is a culture without inns. On the road and in towns hostels are maintained for all travellers, but these have no staff and no luxuries. For long visits people would stay in the private houses of friends and acquaintances, providing most of their own meals but paying nothing since reciprocity is expected. Major towns are cosmopolitan so foreigners would be able to find a welcome with their compatriots, who could also provide advice and information about their adopted land.

INDUCTION

About 100 yards from the road is a large pavilion in striped vermilion and gold. The tent-fly is open to reveal silk covered couches and a table beyond. If anyone approaches the pavilion a female djinni appears with a clap of thunder. She utters a welcome in the name of her master and bids them observe the magic of the pavilion. At one whispered word the flap shuts and cannot be opened, nor can a knife penetrate the fabric; at another the whole structure folds into a tiny sphere. Inside the temperature is pleasantly cool, and, at another word, ewers of fruit juice and baskets of bread appear.

'This can belong to you if you undertake a task for my master,' she states.

If interest is shown the djinni gives a signal and some twenty hippogriffs and riders become visible as they come in to land. She announces them as King Smerdis and his retinue. A meeting will be convened in the pavilion. After polite preliminaries, Smerdis explains that he has recently become the victim of a very clever burglar; a burglar who escaped on a stolen hippogriff, carrying both a gem of great price and his daughter. He desires the capture, alive, of the thief, and the return, unharmed, of the gem, his daughter, and the hippogriff. For attempting this service he offers the pavilion (command words to be given on return and report, including the one causing it to self-destruct). For the return of the gem, the thief, and the girl, he offers the characters' weight in gold for each one. The safe return of the hippogriff will be rewarded with its weight in gold. The same weight in silver will be paid for *information* which leads to their return. Since it is foolish to argue with kings, and it is a royal command, the characters are advised to accept!

Once the task is accepted, more information will be revealed. Smerdis explains that the thief was able to turn their own defences against them so pursuit was impossible. However, they have a good idea of his route, and know that he headed for the trade town of Marutash, the only sizeable settlement in that direction. He then adds some more – unsubstantiated – evidence: a slave claims to have heard the burglar summon the hippogriff – on which his daughter was riding – with a strange call.

Smerdis is in a difficult position: his dwelling is a Sky Castle constructed by his royal ancestors, the Assurids, and the gem provides both its motive force and its defences. As it drifts helplessly, he is unwilling to say anything about it, and thus will not say where he comes from nor why he does not recover the gem himself.

Finally a rendezvous is arranged; the characters are instructed simply to show themselves and wait.

THE ASSURID DYNASTY AND THE SKY CASTLE

The first thing that occurs to anyone seeing the Sky Castle for the first time is 'How in the Nine Hells does it stay up there?' The answer is clearly 'By magic', but surely not by mere human sorcery. The castle, set in elegant gardens, is atop a huge mass of floating rock. This rock was once the summit of mountain, the tallest in the land, and a natural nexus with the Elemental Plane of Air. Hence, on the Prime Material Plane, it was far lighter than any rock has a right to be and on the Aerial Plane it formed an accumulation of mass. The first creatures to make use of the phenomena were djinn. They quarried out a chamber in the rock and used the stone to build the palace on what corresponded to the underside of the phased area. The chamber thus formed filled with air, and was of sufficient size to create a *gate* between the planes.

Meanwhile, Assurus I – Great King and Magician – on account of the height of the mountain had chosen it as the site of a great work. He had eight towers constructed upon it which overlooked the caravan route. As well as forming a constant reminder of his power to anyone passing beneath, they had a practical purpose – the windows were enchanted for scrying. By their use he then discovered the djinn palace and made contact.

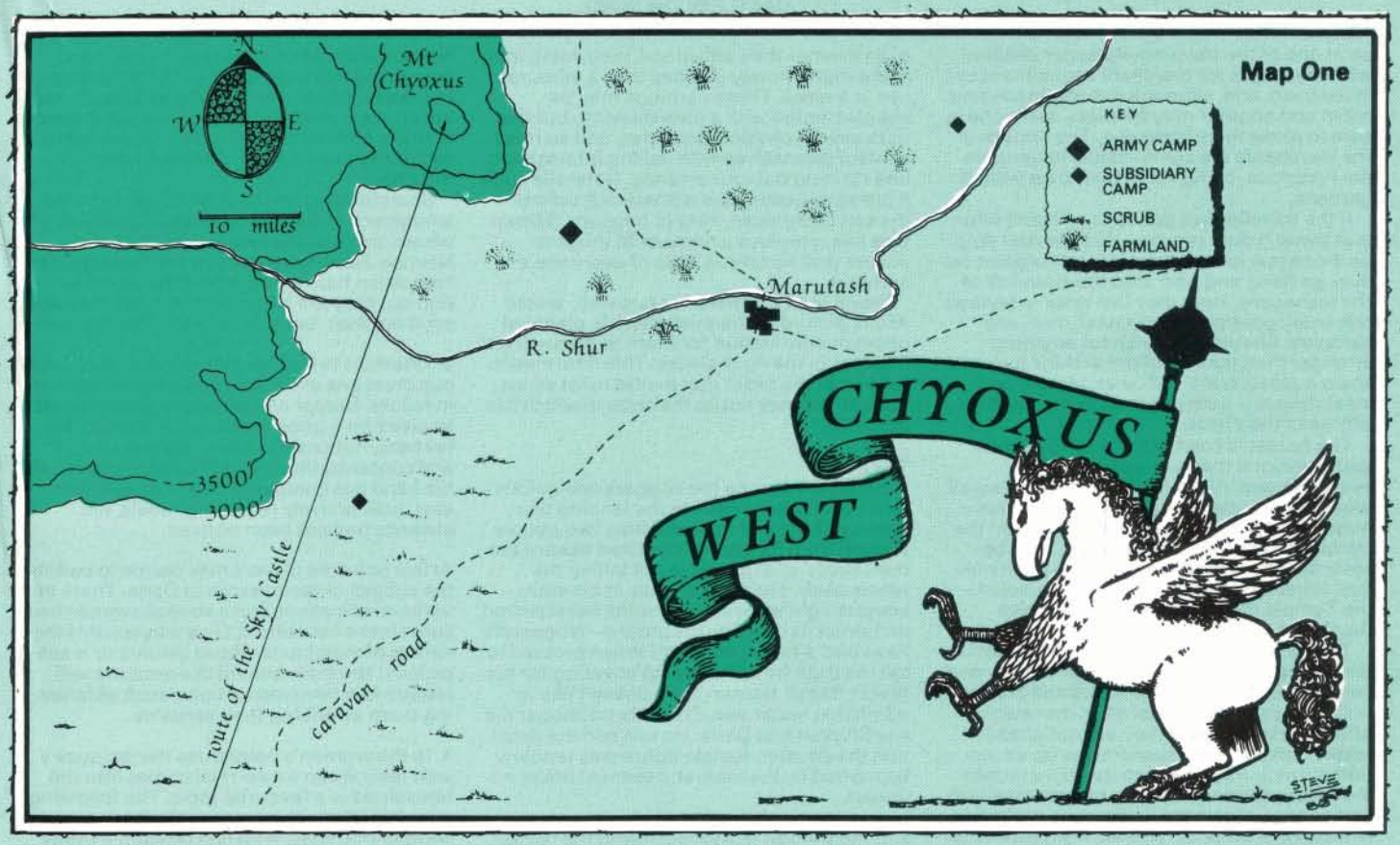
Assurus obtained their assistance in a project to bring warm air from the Aerial Plane to soften the harsh climate on the mountain top and form a shield which flying creatures could not penetrate. He then conceived an even more ambitious project. This time he promised the djinn that as well as sharing the fruits of their labour he would allow them the use of the scrying windows. However, he was deceitful from the first. As far as the djinn knew they were assisting in the manufacture of an artifact – a gem which would call winds from the Elemental Plane of Air for the benefit of both parties. It would provide a further defence against aerial creatures and, for the Prime Material Plane, a better means of weather control, summoning warm or cool breezes so that a new residential palace could be built and surrounded by perpetual summer.

Assurus's true plans were more far-reaching. He had devised a method of splitting the phased rock from the mountain (leaving a sliver on which the air palace could rest), and intended to use the summoned winds to provide motive power so that it could fly. Knowing that this would not please the djinn he prudently persuaded them to agree to an oath of mutual non-aggression, so long as the gem remained in the gate chamber.

When the castle rock left on its maiden flight the djinn were furious. The gem was virtually useless to them when its location no longer corresponded to their territory, and the removal of most of the phased rock left their castle unanchored, so that it required much effort to keep it stable. To placate them Assurus agreed to supply human servants (he sent slaves), which djinn prize, as they so often find themselves in the reverse position.

In time the djinn became resigned to the periodic disturbances caused by the castle's wanderings. These were after all restricted by the supply problem caused by being away from its normal sources. The Assurid dynasty continued to prosper; the flying castle deterred their enemies and cowed the populace, although always more a symbol than an instrument of power. Their eventual eclipse came as much as a result of internal dissent as foreign invasion. Civil war led to some half of the royal family fleeing in the Sky Castle whilst the other half failed to prevent an incursion by desert nomads. The split led to a loss of knowledge. In the Sky Castle no one was left alive who understood how to use the full powers of the gem; to support themselves they turned to banditry. Those who had fled became wanderers, and the nomads took over the bureaucracy to become rulers of Chyoxus.

Some one hundred years later the scenario begins. The nomad rulers themselves have all but lost control of the land, and an Assurid Prince, Shirvan, has formed a rebel army with which he has retaken one-third of the country. He was not entirely alone in this; he had the backing of powerful relatives: his mother, whose high birth has kept him from obscurity; her brother, a fire priest, and, most impor-



tant of all, his father-in-law, Pharnabazus, who has troops to twice the number of the rebels.

PRELUDE

The 'burglar' was that same Assurid prince who is reconquering Chyoxus. He has inherited his great-grandfather's notes on the powers of the gem, and investigation of rumour and legend convinced him that the Sky Castle still existed, although its full powers were not being used. With the most difficult part of his campaign to come (the long desert march to East Chyoxus), he felt it time to regain at least some control of the Sky Castle and its treasury.

Shirvan was unsure of his precise aims: to take over seemed good; to come to some arrangement of mutual benefit more likely, but he went alone so that he could achieve either of them bloodlessly. He hoped to attune himself to the gem, bringing its forgotten powers under control, before making himself known to his relatives and opening negotiations.

Things did not go as planned. He slipped into the castle unseen through a disused secret passage, and had begun attuning himself to the gem when he was discovered. His relatives did not prove as reasonable as he had hoped, being disinclined to listen, let alone talk, so escape became his first priority. He had taken the initial precaution of creating a zone of turbulence (see later), awaiting only his command to activate. As he broke through the door he snatched the gem and headed for the surface via the main vent (a feat only possible with the gem in his possession). Here he had another ace to play – his knowledge of hippogriff language. He called one of the castle's beasts, identifying himself as its ancestral master. However, there was a problem: the beast already had a rider, the beautiful Princess Daria. Pursuit was too close to allow her to dismount, he was not the kind of person to throw her off once they were in the air, so, perforce, he stole girl as well as gem and hippogriff.

The zone of turbulence prevented further pursuit but as they flew they were watched in the Scrying Windows. However, in his unshaven state and desert clothes Shirvan looked more bandit than prince and war leader.

The hippogriff could only fly at night, and in the long daylight hours Shirvan and Daria fell in love. He would have married her straightaway but, although polygamy is the custom, to wed someone of Daria's rank so soon after marriage to his first wife would be an insult to her and her father – which could have cost two-thirds of his army. Therefore he resolved to conceal Daria's existence until such time as it becomes politic to make it known.

Meanwhile the castle-dwellers were in trouble: they could no longer heat nor navigate their palace. Moreover, it was steadily drifting back toward Mount Chyoxus. The leaders, unsure what would happen next, were unwilling to hunt the thief themselves, and therefore hunted for a champion in the windows of scrying.

Navrish/Prince Shirvan Assurid: AC5 or 2; LVL13; HP64; Thief; Human; NG; STR: 17; INT: 13; WIS: 12; CON: 16; DEX: 16; CHA: 16. *Scimitar* +2, +4 *vs Aerial Creatures*; *Elfin Chain* +2; *Leather* +3; *Alekhine's Box*. The latter is a magic item in two parts, which works in a way similar to *Leomund's secret chest* but is activated by a command word and holds only 1 cubic foot of matter. He has used a *wish* to obtain the ability to cast *knock* at will, three times a day.

Everyone says Shirvan's royal descent shows in every line of his bearing. He is handsome, bold and noble, just like a king out of legend. Prince Shirvan is direct heir to the throne of the Assurids. He was born in exile of an ambitious mother (herself an Assurid) and a father more interested in dancing girls than regaining his kingdom. The frustrations of ancient lineage coupled with powerlessness led to the estrangement of father and son, and Shirvan took himself off, incognito, back to the land he claimed.

During the next ten years he established himself as a bandit chieftain, after careers as burglar and a smuggler. His reputation among the populace was not bad, but to the rulers he was a scourge. Navrish, the name he had taken, was known as one who preyed most on the foreign governors and their minions, but treated captives fairly and never killed without cause.

On his father's death Shirvan returned from voluntary exile, and with his mother made plans to retake Chyoxus. She advised his advantageous marriage, and with the experience he had of Chyoxus and his uncle's backing he raised his army. He does not love his wife, Pausania, but respects her, not least because she has already given birth to his son.

He has placed the gem in his *Alekhine's Box*, for which only he knows the command word.

THE INFORMATION TRAIL

No positive sightings of thief, hippogriff, gem or girl are to be found before the town of Marutash.

Marutash (Map 2)

Marutash is a town of green trees and blue waters, a place of restful gardens and entertainment. Before succumbing to its luxuries, the weary traveller from the desert must first deal with the customs post, set against the delightful background of the shanty town. Once duties are paid on gems, silks, gold, spices (and anything else a poor trader might wish to earn an honest penny from), a horde of small boys appear from the noisome huts. They clamour to be your guide to the teahouses and the bazaar, hold your camels while you visit the temple, find a nice girl, take a message to your friends or simply beg for money. The best thing at this point is to accept the services of one and give as the first instruction the order to get rid of all the rest!

Although the teahouses offer enticing refreshments, most travellers will set these aside for the more pressing necessity of the bathhouse. As is usual in this part of the world bathing is communal, although the sexes are segregated. Unless the baths are very crowded, there are ample opportunities for private conversation. Hence the more southerly of Marutash's two bathhouses is well known as little more than a house of ill repute (although business is at least conducted discreetly), and the northerly, while more respectable on the surface, provides an introduction service for merchants wishing to keep customs officers out of their affairs.

The travellers, once clean, may still be tempted by the teahouses but good sense dictates that lodgings be arranged. To avoid the discomfort of the public hostel they can

send one of the ubiquitous beggar children with messages for merchant acquaintances in the town, and, although one might have no room and another may be away, someone is sure to make them welcome. The houses of the merchants are comfortable, verging on the luxurious, being set in their own walled gardens.

If the traveller has goods to sell (and why else travel?) duty requires that the next stop be the bazaar but most would, at this point, let duty go hang and give in to the siren call of the teahouses. Here they can relax in serious talk (well, gossip and tall tales), dice, and cardplay. Should they wish for anything stronger than tea one of the urchins may know a place, but it will be expensive and insalubrious – better to trust to the good offices of their host.

The bazaar is cosmopolitan and chaotic, with everyone trying to sell at profit to everyone else. Although Marutash is a small place the procession of travellers ensures a huge variety of goods on sale. And from the bazaar, across the public garden, may be seen one more essential place on the travellers' itinery, one that cannot be neglected – the Temple of Fire, where they can give thanks for a safe journey.

The most important person in Marutash is the magistrate. He is the voice of the law and commands the customs officers and the town militia. In practice almost all of the town's officers take bribes, if they are not already totally corrupt. The magistrate is no exception, turning a blind eye to the extra money made at customs, providing he gets his share, and giving judgement in law suits according to the size of bribe he receives from each side. The one point in his favour is that he has maintained the irrigation system in good condition.

The least important people might appear to be the beggars, including both urchins and immobile cripples on street corners. However, aside from the genuine cases of hardship, many capitalise upon – and some even invent – their afflictions. In so doing they make more money in a day than a labourer can in a week. These earnings may be supplemented with a little thieving, but this risks severe physical penalties, and so most content themselves with selling information and running dubious errands. Naturally such a lucrative business is not without control – the self designated 'king of beggars', Mitran One Eye, employs a number of thugs to ensure that he takes a tithe of everyone's earnings.

When the PCs arrive in Marutash, armed with a picture of the thief, there is plenty of relevant information for them to discover – if they ask in the right places. This information follows in the order that makes most sense, though this may not be the order in which it is obtained.

The Leads

1. Enquiries among the beggars will quickly turn up an eye witness to the landing of a hippogriff. He will describe how two people slipped from its back and walked toward the merchants' quarter. He is not telling the whole truth. The inaccuracies in his story come to light when he claims the beast reared and struck its hoofs on the ground – hippogriffs have bird's-feet at the front! When pressed to tell the truth he will admit to covering for his friend, 'blind' Hassan, who doesn't like to admit that he can see. This second beggar did see Shirvan and Daria. He can add the detail that the smaller, female figure was tenderly supported by the man, and seemed under no duress.

2. If the portrait is shown around the bazaar there is a 5% chance per day of someone identifying it as the bandit Navrish, but only a 1% chance that they have actually seen him. If shown around the beggars there is a 25% chance per day that it will be recognised by one Shamid.

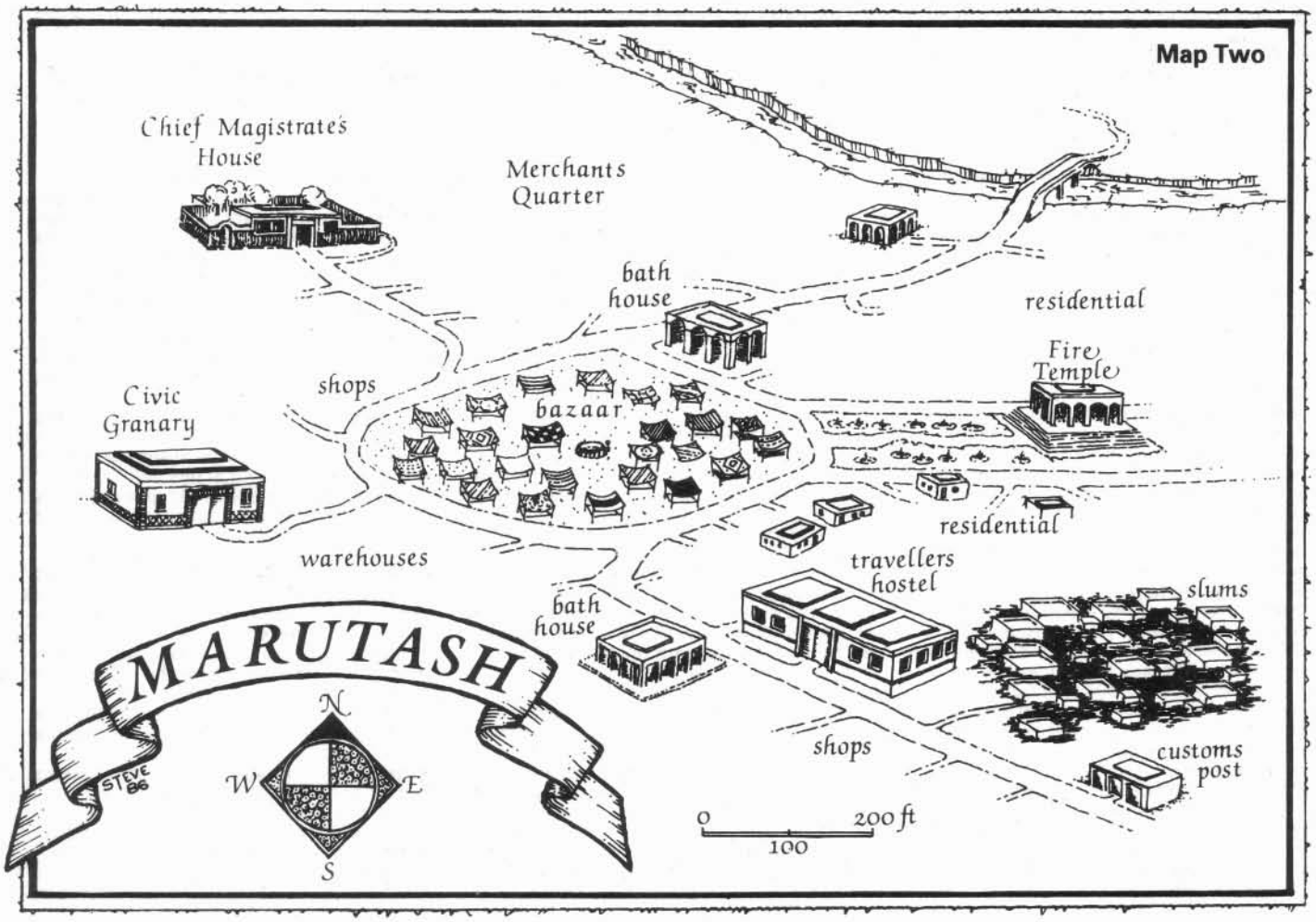
Shamid lies a lot. The truth is that he and Navrish were once associates in diamond smuggling. He attempted to cheat his partner, was robbed of everything as a result, and became a wandering beggar. He will attempt to make himself out to be the injured, innocent party but his story does not hold together.

Shamid can give leads on three diamond smugglers – Aban, Badghis and Cyrus – all of whom are possible contacts of the bandit Navrish. None have any current dealings with him. Aban has retired, and if the other two find out they are being investigated they will send out their 'boys' to deliver a little warning.

3. Attempts to find Navrish in the kind of dubious dives one expects to find a bandit will end in failure. Bazaar and teahouse gossip tends to give him a good press, on account of his fairness, noticeable lack of wanton cruelty, and concentration on the former rulers. Since his band has continued its activities in the east, now actively recruiting rebels, his absence had not been noticed.

At this point the players may decide to switch the subject of their search to Daria. There are various indications that a strange woman has come into a household. Give players only the names of merchants whose behaviour is suspicious; the truth behind the rumours will require further investigations, such as following them or bribing their servants.

4. In the women's bathhouse the jealousy a wife feels when a new rival comes into the household is a favourite topic. The following merchants' wives have recently had cause to complain: Dahak, who has brought a pretty new slave into the household; Badghis who has taken in the daughter of a cousin and is genuinely trying to find her a suitable husband; and Eudoxus, who claims to have given safe haven to his nephew's widowed wife – he died in the war and she is in seclusion poor girl – but is in fact harbouring Daria.



5. Daria had no more than the clothes she stood up in when she went missing, and the following merchants have been noticed in the bazaar spending lavishly on women's clothes, cosmetics and jewellery: Eudoxus, naturally; Aban who is placating his righteously jealous wife; and Cyrus, who has a new mistress.

6. There is a 5% chance per day that an innocent stranger appears to closely resemble the portrait.

7. Zazaz, attendant in the northern bathhouse, is a person who knows everything and will sell anything that does not compromise himself. The players should be given a strong hint of this. He is active as a middleman in the selling of smuggled diamonds. His main contact is Mamush, a customs officer, whom he had instructions to inform if anyone enquires after a hippogriff, a girl or a man resembling Navrish. There is a 25% chance each time that he will hear of any enquiries made in the men's side of the bathhouse, 5% in the women's side, the bazaar or teahouses, and 10% if made of the beggars.

Mamush: AC6; LVL8; HP41; Assassin; STR: 14; INT: 13; WIS: 12; CON: 15; DEX: 16; CHA: 8. +2 *Scimitar*, shortbow.

Mamush is employed as a customs investigator by the bureaucracy, usually working undercover. He does his job well, for the most part, but for a number of years has been in the pay of the smuggler, Eudoxus (and thus, indirectly, Shirvan). If he places a report implicating the PCs in smuggling it will be acted upon without question. Any such report will allow for the possibility of retraction without embarrassment to Mamush.

Other information may be obtained which is not of obvious relevance to the players.

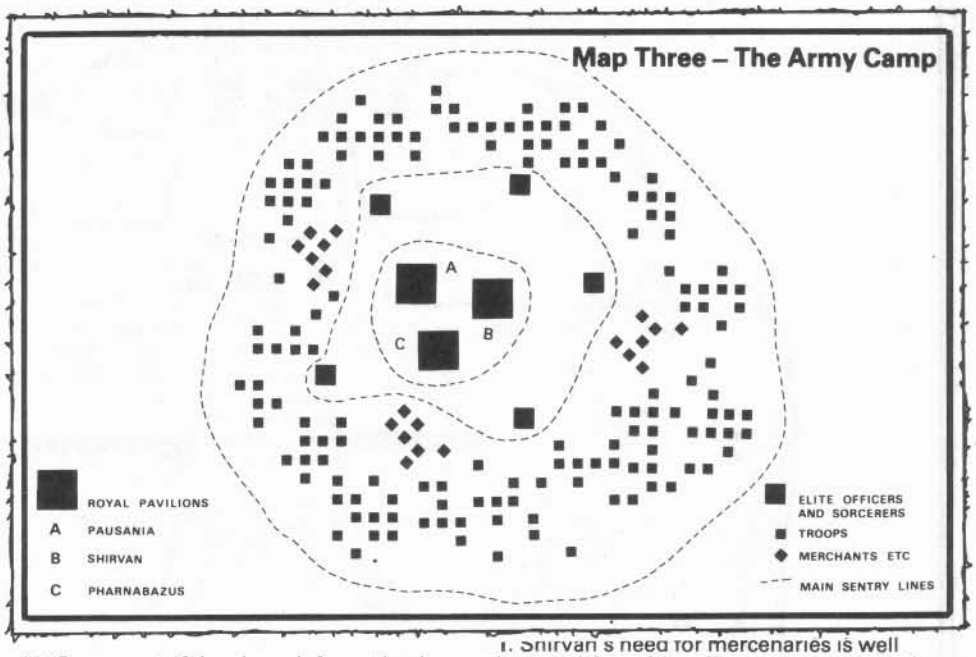
8. The women in the bathhouse know a great deal about the private life of Prince Shirvan (for example, that his wife is ambitious, very jealous and rather ruthless). There is a 20% chance per day that someone will have picked up the rumour that she is displeased about his failure to properly account for his recent movements (since he has been dividing his time between the army and the conquered province – few others have realised that there is anything to explain). If this story is told there is an additional 20% chance that someone will know of his previous ten-year-long absence.

9. Two stories shed some light on the morals of the people of the Sky Castle:

Faruz, a merchant, had six adventurers as his guests a year ago. They showed him a roc's egg which they claimed they were to take to a mysterious patron. However, they needed to borrow money for the purchase of camels, which would be repaid when they received their reward. Faruz believed them and made the loan. He has not seen them since and warns others than even the sons of their father's friends may cheat them.

Khetash, a rather disreputable mercenary, shared a roadside hostel with six travellers. He was woken when they crept out in the night. Intrigued he followed them into the desert. He hid behind a rock just in time to avoid discovery as a number of hippogriffs and riders appeared from nowhere. After a short discussion the travellers mounted behind the riders and they all flew away. Khetash decided to await their return. When after two days they had not reappeared he sold five of the camels to some passing nomads and made himself scarce on the sixth.

The significance of these stories is that the Sky Castle people, having commissioned the finding of a roc's egg, did not pay the travellers but gave them to the djinn as slaves. They do not appear to make good patrons. . . .



10. Once most of the above information has been garnered, it is time to throw any theories into confusion. Shirvan is to ride, in procession, to the Fire Temple to give thanks for his victories (he cannot join Pharnabazus in the Holy of Holies, being a sky-worshipper).

There is a 10% chance per person that the resemblance to the portrait is noticeable, rising to 50% should Shirvan speak to them.

During the procession Shirvan is attacked by an invisible stalker (see later for details), an ally of the djinn seeking the gem. If the party attempt to assist him (although he can dispatch it without help) this will serve as a favourable introduction.

The Army Camp (Map 3)

The information trail now leads to the army camp. This is situated 15 miles north of Marutash. The main disposition of forces is outlined in *Map 3.* Like all armies of the time it has its quota of camp-followers and hangers-on. Nonetheless it is a disciplined force, and security is good. It is worth noting the defences against *invisible* infiltration. The chief of these is a pseudodragon familiar, which is most active at night; otherwise everyone, even the children, are on the watch for signs, such as the mysterious appearance of footprints or 'motiveless' unease of the dogs. If the alarm 'Invisible intruder!' is given, everyone seizes sticks and begins systematically sweeping. It requires considerable agility to evade this, and all the while the army sorcerers are casting their *detect* spells. A far better means of obtaining information about the army is to adopt a disguise, but the tents of all important people are very well guarded against the unauthorised.

Shirvan is normally attended by guards and his entourage. A typical group of companions follows:

Cambyses: AC3, LVL12; HP26 (40, with pseudodragon); Magic-User; Human; NG; STR: 12; INT: 16; WIS: 13; CON: 10; DEX: 9; CHA: 14. *Bracers of Defence AC3, +2 Dagger, Wand of Negation.*

Farrash: AC6, LVL13; HP68; Cleric (of air god); Human; NG; STR: 17; INT: 12; WIS: 17; CON: 15; DEX: 10; CHA: 10. +3 *Mace, Flying Carpet, Scroll* of *resurrection.*

Three fighters: AC4; LVL8; HP48, 55, 84. Scimitars.

Six fighters: AC5; LVL2; HP11, 16, 20, 13, 15, 17. Scimitars.

As with the town useful leads may be established here.

1. Shirvan's need for mercenaries is well known. A few of the officers are aware that he is particularly looking for a group of foreigners of sufficient status and ability to act as his envoys in a 'delicate' affair – he wants them to negotiate with the Sky Castle. This is an offer that could easily be made to the characters.

2. The tale of Shirvan's ten-year-long disappearance can be picked up in gossip, and painstaking research will reveal that he was recently missing for three weeks, as everyone thinks he was somewhere else.

In addition to all the above information the players cannot fail to hear numerous wild tales of the legendary Sky Castle, all more or less inaccurate, none making clear the role of the djinn or the existence of the gem.

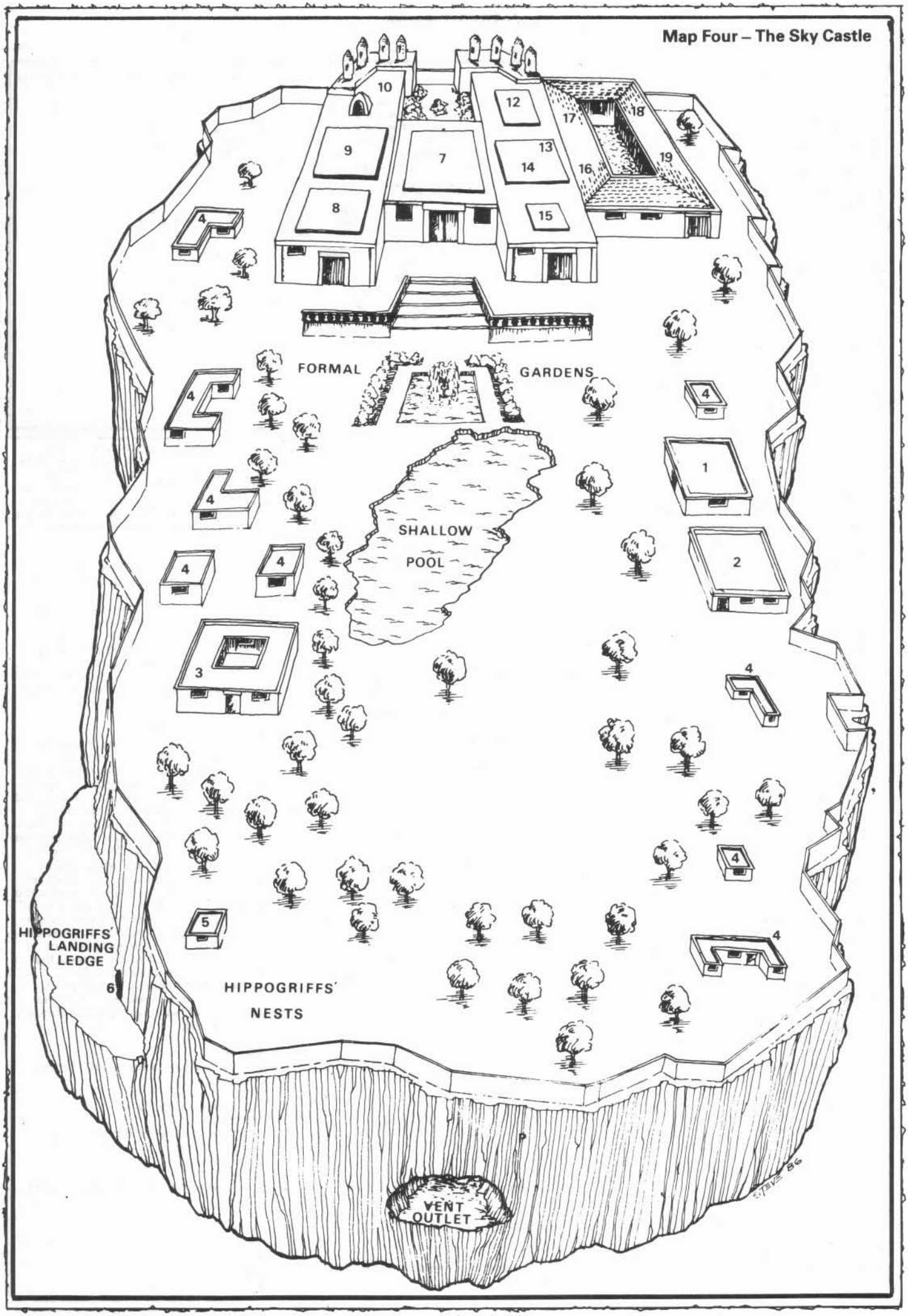
THE SKY CASTLE (MAP 4)

The Sky Castle rests on a block of granite, some 500 yards by 400, which drifts at a height of 4800 feet. From below it has been camouflaged by *hallucinatory terrain* spells to resemble a cloud formation. The air shield prevents access to the surface of the rock, save for a ledge where hippogriffs land. From there tunnels lead upward to a lodge and the untidy nests of the hippogriffs. Outside the lodge are beautiful gardens where exotic trees screen the single storey houses of servants and officials. At the opposite end is the palace, built in two contrasting styles, the tall stone scrying towers, and the lower residential building. The usual method of construction is mud brick on a framework of stone pillars and doorways. The whole reflects the oriental love of large-scale splendour, whereby even the kitchens and servants' rooms are enormous. Frescoes adorn the walls and the nobles' rooms are overflowing with art treasures.

Key (Map 4)

All buildings are single storey (10') unless indicated otherwise.

1. Mitanni's house
2. Treasurer's house
3. Guest house
4. Guards' and servants' houses
5. Exit from tunnel
6. Tunnel entrance
7. Hall (40')
8. Storerooms and other workrooms (20')
9. Kitchens
10. Temple
11. Towers
12. Women's quarters
13. Labs and workrooms
14. King's quarters
15. Library of records (20')


Map Four – The Sky Castle
10
12
17
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13
14
16
19
8
15
4
FORMAL
GARDENS
4
4
1
SHALLOW
POOL
2
4
4
3
4
4
5
4
HIPPOGRIFFS'
LANDING
LEDGE
6
HIPPOGRIFFS'
NESTS
VENT
OUTLET

16. Queen's Ladies' apartments
17. Queen's apartments
18. Labs and workrooms
19. Kitchens

Below the surface are some more practical constructions. Each house has its own cellar store, which forms a retreat in case of attack. The palace is built over a whole network of tunnels and chambers, including the dungeons and the treasure vault, as well as the access for both the Scrying Towers and the Chamber of Winds. The former is reached by a long shaft which has been enchanted by *levitation* spells to function as a lift.

Mechanics and Magic of the Sky Castle
The Sky Castle functions by means of an ingenious marriage of sorcery and engineering, the outline of which is given below.

The Air Shield. The original air shield of Assurus I formed a dome over the rock from its surface to a height of 600 feet. It does not cover the rear vent for the 'propulsion system' and the landing ledge. Creatures of less than six hit dice cannot penetrate this shield, and those of more take between 3–6 rounds to do so. Within the air shield the temperature is a constant 68°F. It does not prevent the casting of spells and is negated by a *Ring of Free Action*.

The Gem of Many Winds. The functions of the gem fashioned by Assurus II and the djinn are as follows (an asterisk indicates powers unknown to the current inhabitants):

1. *It can raise or lower the height of the rock by varying its effective density with the Elemental Plane of Air from between 10 and 90%.
2. A cool or warm breeze may be called in 1-6 turns.
3. A cold or hot breeze may be called in 1-6 hours.
4. A wind of travel, capable of moving the castle at up to 1 mph, may be called in 1-6 hours (it takes 5 hours to reach top speed!).
5. A zone of turbulence, 100-200yds thick, may be created outside the air shield. Any creature within the area takes 3d6 points of damage per round, and must save vs wands each round to even move at one quarter their normal speed. This is intended to prevent attempts to penetrate the air shield or to hover outside casting spells. Indeed, as it distorts vision, the latter would become difficult in any case. It is formed from existing winds of travel in 5-10 rounds by causing them to split and curve. Movement is not possible while it is in operation, and it may last for 20 turns, at the end of which the wind of travel is dispersed.
6. The gem protects an area around it from the summoned winds.
7. When the gem is in place living creatures cannot use the *gate*, unless beings from both planes act together to negate the effect.
8. The area covered by the air shield may be altered.
9. The towers of scrying have been modified to function like giant organ pipes. Through them summoned breezes have one or two effects: firstly the *paean of courage*, which acts like a *prayer* on the defenders, and secondly the *howl of terror*, which causes its victims to become prostrate with *fear*. Creatures of less than three hit dice have no save, those above 10HD are immune, and for all others a saving throw negates. Manipulation of the air shield can bring these effects into play either inside or outside.
10. *Once the gem is removed the Sky Castle tends to return to its mountain of origin, drifting very slowly until it slides into place. None of its functions are possible until six hours after the gem has been replaced.

The Gate Chamber (Map 5). The gate to the Plane of Air is a massive, hollow sphere in the centre of the rock. The gem is placed on a framework of gold on the lowest point. Once the winds have been summoned they are directed to the appropriate ducts. There are two of these, a massive vent for the winds of travel, and a smaller for breezes of temperature control and sound. Valves direct the wind where it is required. If the chamber is sealed airtight (as can be done) the *gate* can no longer be used.

The Windows of Scrying. From these windows there are views, for one hundred miles in any direction, of the corresponding points on the planes of Fire, Air, Earth, Water, Astral, Ethereal and Shadow, as well as the Prime Material. In addition, a close up view of any location known by sight may be obtained (walls are no obstacle). However, it is not possible to focus on a person, creature or object.

Castle Defences. The scenario does not require a direct assault on the Sky Castle (it would be rather foolish). Therefore only those defences of direct relevance are detailed.

Castle Residents
The inhabitants of the castle have been out of touch with the rest of the world for some time. They have avoided their ancestral lands – living as bandits, raiding herds for meat and caravans for goods and slaves. Their only contacts have been with a corrupt merchant who exchanges goods (with no questions), those slaves they decide to keep for themselves, and a succession of djinn envoys. The latter share the scrying mirrors and oversee the selection of their tribute of 'servants'.

King Smerdis: AC1; LVL11; HP31; Illusionist; Human; LE; STR: 11; INT: 17; WIS: 8; CON: 13; DEX: 18; CHA: 10. *Bracers of Defence* AC5; *Staff* +2; *Scroll* of *mass suggestion* and *prismatic spray*.
Spells: 1st level – *change self, colour spray, phantasmal force, detect illusion*. 2nd level – *blur, detect magic, invisibility, fog cloud, hypnotic pattern*. 3rd level – *dispel illusion, fear, hallucinatory terrain, invisibility 10' radius, spectral force*. 4th level – *confusion, improved invisibility, minor creation, phantasmal killer*. 5th level – *major creation, maze, projected image*.

A somewhat weak-willed man, Smerdis rules in name only; the real power is held by his mother, Stateira. He has five concubines and no living wife. None of his sons survived beyond infancy.

Queen Stateira: AC2; LVL10; HP47; Magic-User; Human (female); NE; STR: 10; INT: 17; WIS: 14; CON: 16; DEX: 9; CHA: 17. *Bracers of Defence*; AC4; *Ring of Protection* +2; *Ring of Invisibility*; *Wand of Magic Missiles*; *Wand of Wonder*.
Spells: 1st level – *detect magic, feather fall, magic missile, sleep, unseen servant, burning hands, identity, protection from evil*. 2nd level – *detect invisibility, invisibility, levitate, strength, web, locate object*. *3rd level – invisibility 10' radius, fireball, fly, slow, protection from normal missiles, suggestion*. 4th level – *polymorph self, hallucinatory terrain, minor globe of invulnerability, remove curse, dimension door*. 5th level – *conjure elemental, clone of cold, telekinesis, stone shape*.

Stateira is an utterly terrifying old lady. She thinks only of maintaining her own power, and is more than a little insane. She is jealous of her granddaughters and denies them power by denying them marriage. In order to be present at events usually denied to one of her sex she uses *polymorph self* to take the form of a djinni attendant of Smerdis's, trusting to her spells, particularly *conjure elemental* to duplicate the necessary powers.

Princess Lydia: AC8; LVL3; HP9; Illusionist; Human (female); NG; STR: 12; INT: 16; WIS: 12; CON: 10; DEX: 17; CHA: 7.
Spells: 1st level – *colour spray, detect illusion, phantasmal force, wall of fog, change self*. 2nd level – *blur, detect magic, magic mouth, invisibility, hypnotic pattern*.

Lydia is Smerdis's daughter by his first wife. She suffers greatly from her grandmother's jealousy, and although she disapproves of the way the castle gets its living she feels powerless to prevent it.

Princess Daria: AC10; LVL'0'; HP4; Magic-User; Human (female); NG; STR: 12; INT: 16; WIS: 10; CON: 15; DEX: 14; CHA: 17.

Except that she is prettier, Smerdis's daughter by his second wife could be a younger version of Lydia. However, she still dreams that things may change.

Mitanni: AC0; LVL10; HP98; Fighter; Human; N; STR: 17; INT: 13; WIS: 12; CON: 17; DEX: 9; CHA: 14.

Captain of the guard, half-brother to Smerdis by a concubine. He is the only candidate for the succession but takes care that no one suspects he knows this.

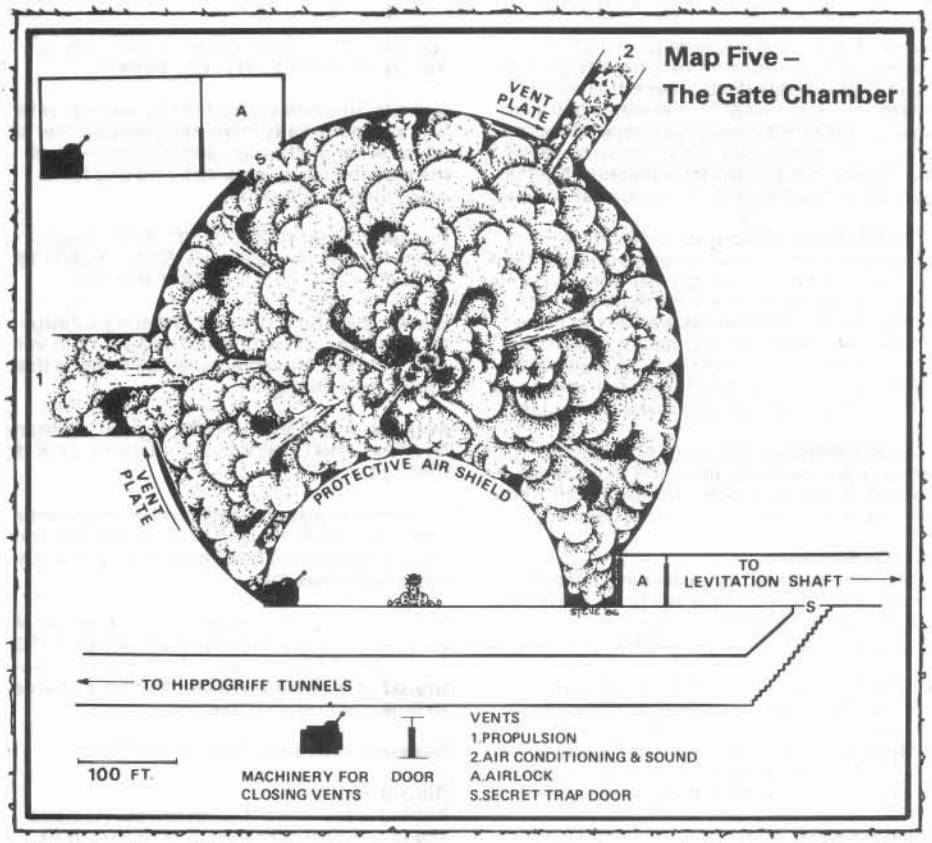
Sassan: AC6; LVL7; HP44; Cleric; Human; N; STR: 16; INT: 11; WIS: 15; CON: 17; DEX: 12; CHA: 10. +2 *Mace*; and, in the Temple Treasury, 6 *Scrolls* of *remove fear* that he is unable to imagine finding a use for.

Sassan has two acolytes, levels 3 and '0'.

Rimsid: Djinni
Rimsid is the current djinn envoy. He has a spy in the Assurid camp, one of Stateira's ladies in waiting to whom he has promised three *wishes* for her co-operation.

In addition, there are 200 guards, 10 noble warriors, 20 other nobles, 120 free servants, 70 slaves and 80 children. A number of the guards and free servants are children of Smerdis or his father by concubines.
Sixty hippogriffs live on the landing edge and the nesting area. Only forty of these will be fit to fly at any one time.
The palace treasure vault contains a number of magic items in addition to those detailed above.

PLOT DEVELOPMENT
At this stage of the scenario the players' actions will have had a great deal of influence on what happens next. However, it is likely that Shirvan will get to the Sky Castle, either as captive or ambassador, and the PCs must also go there to collect their reward. If Shirvan comes as a free agent he will not do so without some security, hence he will ask that a few prominent Sky Castle residents join his army as 'honoured guests' – ie hostages.
Even as a captive Shirvan holds a number of bargaining counters: only he can recover the gem from his *Alekhine's Box*, his understanding of its full properties is unique, and he is able to promise a share in the ancestral kingdom. Once they know his identity the Sky Assurids may well decide they would do better to join forces with him and sit down to decide just who concedes what.
To summarise the motives of the principals: Shirvan's most pressing need is for money – the Sky Castle is useful in war in a symbolic rather than material sense – but his most fervent desire is to marry Daria. Stateira wishes Smerdis to retain control of the Sky Castle, and, if the war is successfully prosecuted, to rule a province at the very least. However, her long-term aspirations are more far-reaching... Smerdis has spent a long time resisting his mother's ambitions; he would be content to spend the revenues of a province on dancing girls and wine. Rimsid has refrained from mentioning that the oath his people gave is now invalid and protests his exclusion from discussions, claiming that he must 'protect his people's interests'. This is a mere smokescreen, for the djinn plan an attack as soon as possible. They wish to be rid



of the Assurids and their palace altogether, keeping the gem and the windows for themselves.

Until discussions are concluded the reward for the characters cannot be determined, thus they are still guests when the castle ceases to drift.

ARRIVAL AT MOUNT CHYOXUS

From the moment characters arrived, it was obvious that there was something seriously wrong with the castle. The buildings were list ing slightly, the more tender of the garden plants dying, and the whole moving, very slowly, toward the flat peak of Mount Chyoxus.

Shortly after everyone has arrived it reaches the mountain and slides into place with painful joltings. Unless actually tied down, all should roll under dexterity three times and take 1-6 points of stunning damage for each failure. In addition several small trees will fall over and a large hippogriff run amok.

AERIAL ATTACK

The return to Mount Chyoxus brings the *gate* within djinn territory, and, with the gem absent, it is open to them. They could not attack before this since only the djinn can *plane shift* at will and they were too few to fight without their invisible stalker and air elemental subjects. Their greatest problem then was not getting their forces into the Sky Castle but getting them in unseen. The Assurids, while not expecting an imminent attack, keep a close eye on the Aerial Plane through the scrying window. However, their intelligence was limited by the number of *detect invisible* spells available to them – there are only Stateira's three. She takes care that Rimsid does not know her movements, but is unaware of his spy among her ladies.

Eventually the infiltration of the aerial creatures will become known, whether because Stateira evades vigilance or the player characters are indulging their curiousity. As a result the Assurids must settle their differences to defend the Sky Castle, and the djinn are forced to attack before they are ready.

The battle is heralded by a dreadful noise which causes all the lesser and some of the greater folk of the palace to prostrate themselves in panic, hands over their ears. There are six air elementals forcing air through the pipes of the Scrying Towers to produce the *howl of terror*. Immediately afterwards, bands of invisible stalkers attack any large groups of people they find still standing, which will probably include the player characters. A similar band hangs back to defend the elementals. Anyone able to *detect invisible* may observe that the enemy are still arriving, emerging from every duct and vent of the 'heating system'. Stateira and Smerdis spend the first few rounds on their personal defences, and then concentrate on finding out just what is going on. They are joined by Shirvan for the briefest of war conferences, after which the former concentrate on stopping the elementals in order to free the troops, whilst the latter goes to close the *gate*. To do this he must operate the manual master controls to seal the chamber; as the keys are lost he must use his talent for burglary and would welcome any of the player characters who might be able to help. To assist them Stateira sends her *Wand of Wonder*.

Closing the Gate

The usual access to the chamber, the levitation shaft, renders them too vulnerable to their attackers. Shirvan knows of another way, which he used on his initial visit. It is a disused stairway, leading off from the hippogriff tunnel. Its drawback is that it will require all his *knock* spells to open the three *wizard-locked* doors along its length.

In the Chamber, seven invisible stalkers are waiting to attack anyone who attempts to close the *gate*. They know something the players do not – that the controls in the chamber can be overridden by still another set in a secret room. Three of them are guarding the entrance to this, high on the ceiling, but will join the battle if no approach is made to them. Anyone who has time to wonder what they are up to can see a tiny reflective area, this is a *glassteel*-covered peephole. In the centre of the chamber an additional invisible stalker per round is coming through the *gate*; because of the Chamber's size they take a further round to reach its lowest point.

Invisible Stalkers: AC1 (3 if can be seen); HD8; HP32, 41, 43, 32, 32, 38, 37, 43, 31, 32, 38, 29, 31, 37, 39, 30, 36, 30, 27, 39 (This number should be sufficient!); Att 4-16; invisibility, magic resistance 30%, surprise on a 1-5; N; (*MM*).

The Controls

The master controls appear old and rusty. There are three levers, all locked into the 'open' position. Each lock is trapped and a futher trap operates if they are not pulled in the correct order. Each trap takes from 1-6 rounds to find and disarm. Once this is done each thief may make an intelligence check to realise that there is a further override mechanism. Once a trap has been triggered it will halve the chance that the lock may be picked.

The traps are as follows:

1. On the locks:

a. A simple poison needle, the poison has faded, save at +4 to avoid coma.

b. A blade slices out at the hands. Roll under dexterity (on d20) to avoid severance and 1d10 points of damage.

c. The floor gives way slightly; make a dexterity check to avoid the feet being trapped and crushed for 2d10 points of damage.

2. On the levers:

If not pulled simultaneously, water rapidly fills the chamber to a depth of ten feet.

Should the players still believe these are the true master controls and pull the levers they are in for an unpleasant surprise: Rimsid, the djinni, had entered the override room before their arrival. As the seals begin to slide across the vents he pulls the override lever (taking 8 points of damage from a *fire trap* after saving) and they slide right back again. If necessary further intelligence checks may be made to understand what has happened.

The Override Room

This is guarded by magic – the *fire trap*, as mentioned, and some very unpleasant glyphs filling the floor: *slay living, energy drain, symbol* (*hopelessness*) and *blade barrier*. Like the djinni the players may avoid these by flying.

Noble Djinni: AC4; HD10; HP51 (43); Att 3-24; *invisibility, create illusion, become gaseous, windwalk, form a whirlwind*, grant three *wishes*.

Rimsid has created three illusory djinn with which to oppose the adventurers. If given enough time (1 turn) he will call a whirlwind (3d6 points of damage) with which to attack as they fly up to the secret room. If defeated he will not give up his life if he can help it, but plane-shift away.

CONCLUSION

The Sky Assurids will succeed in halting the *howl of terror*, thus enabling more defenders to enter the field, most of them mounted on hippogriffs. They have suffered a number of casualties but, providing no more enemy reinforcements arrive, can cope with the remainder.

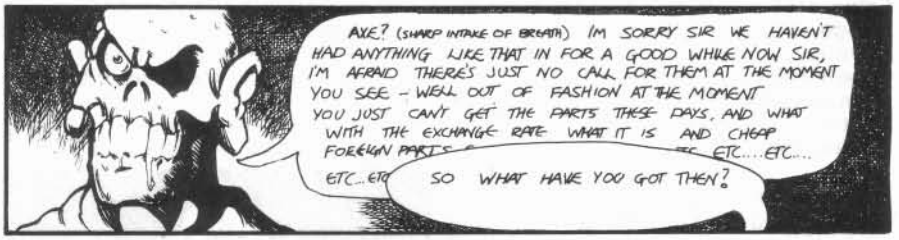
Victory will bring a flood of family feeling and general goodwill which will carry Stateira and Smerdis through some amiable treaty making, and even cause them to consider a more generous reward for the player characters (after all, with Shirvan observing how they keep their word they can scarcely do otherwise).

Observation in the Scrying Windows will reveal the djinn in confusion. A short civil war leads to a change of leadership, and the new ruler sues for peace. They are once more allowed a share in the use of the gem and in return must supply five invisible stalker slaves per year to Shirvan's army (they are not having them in the Sky Castle!).

Once he has come to terms with her parents, Shirvan may return Daria to the Sky Castle, arranging to marry her as soon as his army is bigger than his father-in-law's.

Acknowledgements
Thanks to Paul Stamforth for collaboration on the Sky Castle design. □

THRUD THE BARBARIAN



(BET'CHA DIDN'T EXPECT THAT!)

Treasure Chest *is a regular department for readers' ideas about the* AD&D *game. This issue, some of the more powerful spells from the* WD *spell book.*

HOW DO YOU SPELL THAT?

MITHRALL'S WONDERFUL GYRATOR
(Evocation, Alteration)
by Robert Nott

Usable by: Magic-User
Level: 6
Range: 2" + 1"/level
Duration: 1 turn + 4 rounds/level
Area of Effect: One creature
Components: V,S
Casting Time: 6 segments
Saving Throw: Neg

When cast at a creature, this spell causes it to be flung high into the air and rotate and whirl around at various speeds and directions. The saving throw is made at −2. While the spell lasts, the creature is helpless, and incapable of casting spells or fighting. The magic-user is in control of the spell at all times and he may make the creature rise higher or lower, or revolve faster, or whatever. If the wizard so wishes, he can make the creature revolve so fast that its body is torn apart and scattered into shreds.

BANISH SPIRIT
(Conjuration/Summoning)
by Briony Palmer

Usable by: Magic-User
Level: 7
Range: 1"/level
Duration: Permanent
Area of Effect: One creature
Components: V,S,M
Casting Time: 7 segments
Saving Throw: Neg

This magic will, unless a saving throw is made, banish a creature's spirit to its alignment plane. The spell will leave the creature's body as an empty husk. The prime use for this spell is to prepare the way for the *magic jar* spell, since a successful casting of both dispenses with the necessity to make periodic saving throws against being overcome by the creature's spirit, since it is no longer present.

MERGER
(Alteration)
by Neil Richards and Keith Adeney

Usable by: Magic-User
Level: 9
Range: Touch
Duration: Permanent
Area of Effect: Items to be merged. 10lb weight/level of spellcaster
Components: V,S,M
Casting Time: 24hrs of uninterrupted concentration.
Saving Throw: None

This spell causes the non-living matter of two objects to merge into each other. The spellcaster can then choose properties of the resultant material from the properties of the merged items (cf *glassteel*). For example, 10lb glass merged with 10lb steel yields 20lb *glassteel*.

Magical objects may be merged into one. For example, a +1 intelligent sword merged with a +4 non-intelligent sword yields a +4 intelligent sword. If a hammer is *merged* with a sword, the wielder may switch between the shapes of each. Note the egos of the weapons will be added.

The spell is usually cast in a darkened lead-lined room, for if the spell caster is

disturbed everything within the room must save or be *disintegrated* (if the chamber is not lead-lined, then everything within 15" radius must save). After the casting the magic-user must rest for two days. Additionally, the magic-user will lose 1 point of constitution unless a 25000gp blue diamond is crushed over the merging items during spell preparation. The magic-user must mix beechwood sap and drops of his blood with the crushed diamond. Subsequently, the magic-user loses 1 hit point permanently. After the magic-user has saved vs system shock, due to the powers involved, the items merge. The chance of *dispelling* a *merger* is 1% per level of the magic-user.

SHADOW BANE
(Conjuring, Summoning)
by Briony Palmer

Usable by: Magic-User
Level: 8
Range: 1"/level
Duration: 1 round/level
Area of Effect: One creature
Components: V,S
Casting Time: 8 segments
Saving Throw: None

For the duration of the spell, any attack, influence, etc, lauched by the magicked creature on the spell caster will be experienced by both. If saving throws are to be applied, it is the magician's that are used – the result being applied to both parties. For example, if a *disintegrate* spell was cast at the spell caster who subsequently failed the saving throw, then both magician and aggressor would be disintegrated.

IXTMAL'S GLOBE OF PYROMANIC DELIGHT
(Evocation)
by Phil Hine

Usable by: Magic-User
Level: 7
Range: 0
Duration: 1 turn + 1 round/level
Area of Effect: Special
Components: V,S,M
Casting Time: 1 round
Saving Throw: Halves damage

This spell creates a 3' diameter sphere of green flames. It floats ahead of the caster while the spell lasts, at a distance of up to 6". Anything flammable within 5' of the sphere (except the caster and his gear) must make a saving throw or burst into flames for 1d6 rounds. Anything (provided it is non-magical) *touched* by the *globe* immediately bursts into flames (no save). The sphere's touch causes 6d6 damage to living creatures. Each time something is ignited the globe emits an insane, mocking cackle. The material component is a green agate worth at least 1000gp.

DESTRUCTION
(Alteration) Reversible
by Wesley Phoa

Usable by: Clerics, Druids
Level: 8
Range: Special
Duration: Permanent
Area of Effect: Special
Components: V,S,M
Casting Time: 1 segment
Saving Throw: Not applicable

When cast, this spell destroys the universe. Material components include an ounce of myrrh, a fine quality (2000gp) black opal, three dead leaves from a weeping willow and seventy thousand tons of plutonium. The reverse of this spell, *creation*, requires six full days to cast (the spell-caster must rest for a full day afterwards) but no material components are necessary. □

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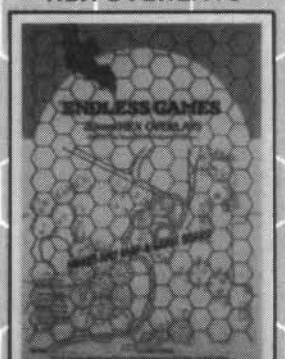

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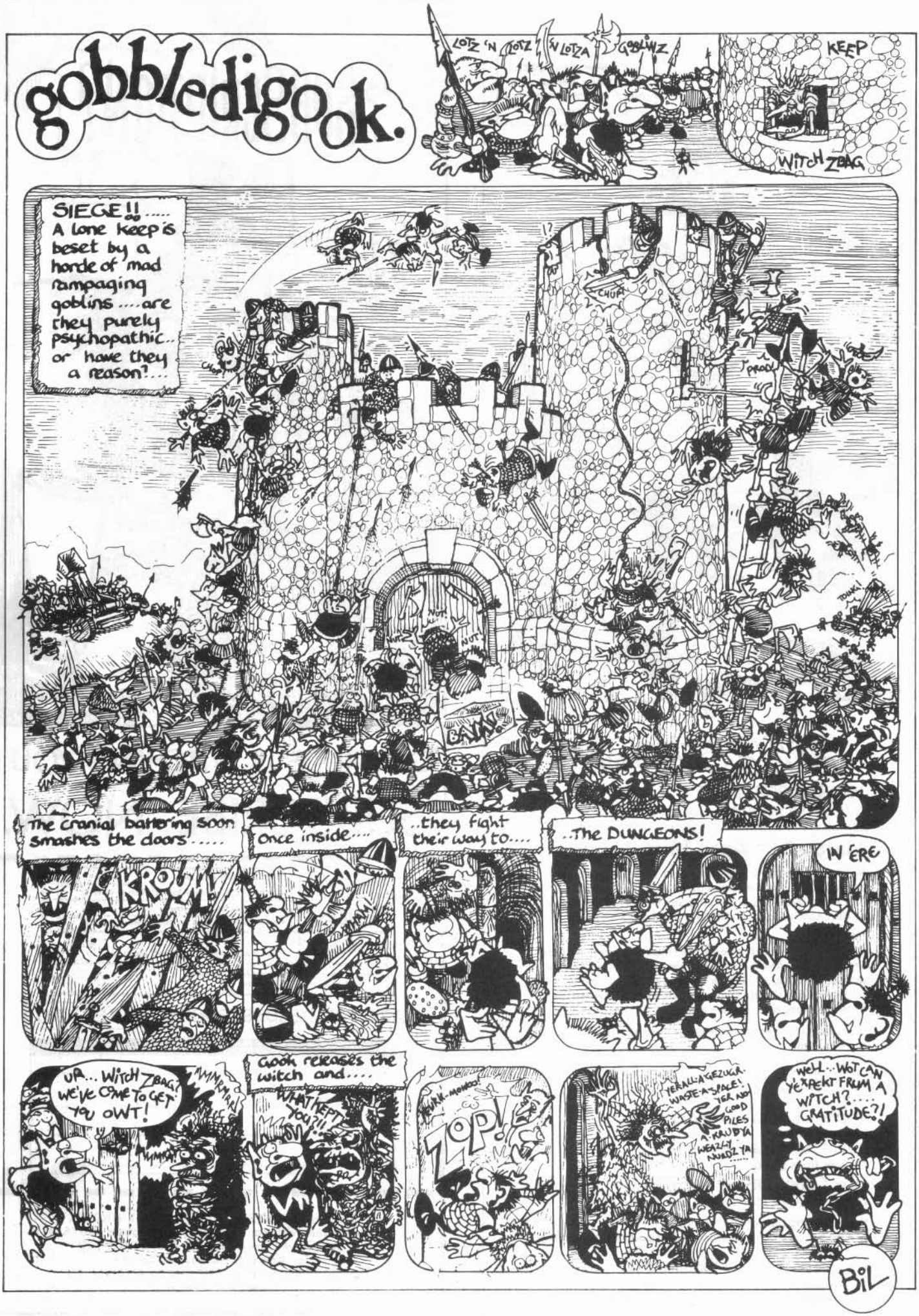
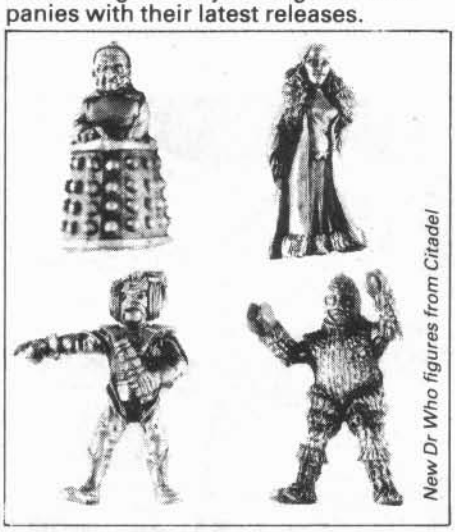

gobbledigook.
LOTZ 'N LOTZ 'N LOTZA GOBLINZ
KEEP
WITCH ZBAG
SIEGE!! ..... A lone keep is beset by a horde of mad rampaging goblins ....are they purely psychopathic.. or have they a reason?....
CHOP
NUT
BANG
The cranial battering soon smashes the doors.....
KROUM!
Once inside....
..they fight their way to....
..The DUNGEONS!
IN 'ERE
UP... WITCH ZBAG! WE'VE COME TO GET YOU OUT!
Gook releases the witch and....
WHAT HEFT YOU?!!
ZOP!
TERALL-A-GEZUGA. WASTE-A-SPACE! TGA NOT GOOD PILES A-KNUDYA WEAZLY NUADZ YA
WELL... WOT CAN YE EXPECT FRUM A WITCH?..... GRATITUDE?!
BIL

FRACAS!

TEQUILA SUNSET
As the *Thunderbirds* introduction used to have it, 'Anything can happen in the next half hour.' In this case, it's more 'this month', but the principle is the same. As a result of our last correspondent disgracing himself in a French magazine, *White Dwarf* has yet another news page writer. After all, we do have a reputation to maintain. . . .

UNCLE TOM COLLINS AND ALL . . .
Cursed last month by a shortage of news, this time there is almost too much. If only events' organisers would bear in mind magazine deadlines, then coverage of this year's *Toy Fair* might even have made last issue. . . .

The *Earl's Court Toy and Hobby Fair* is the annual event which allows the trade to display the goods that will appear in shops over the next year. Although mainly for toy manufacturers, games companies were quite well represented – including the major rolegame companies with their latest releases.


New Dr Who figures from Citadel

After making an important call to the bar, I went to the *TSR* stand. On display were some new modules – *X10 Red Arrow, Black Shield* ('A *Battlesystem*™ Game/War Machine Spectacular!'), and *Lankhmar*, the adventure to go with, um, er . . . *Lankhmar*. Also on show was a mock-up of the *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide*, due for release in May/June this year. Although it hasn't been fully written yet, it looks like it's going to be a collection of traps, ideas, advice to adventurers, and ways of 'getting the best' from a particular character class, etc. All of which sounds like good, basic commonsense material that is best suited to magazine articles. Certainly it seems to shift the emphasis on to the competitive aspects of the *AD&D* game at the expense of the role-playing element.

Passhing via the bar, I then visited the *Games Workshop* stand. This was very impressive, being put together in the shape of a castle. New *Citadel* figures on display included some of the *Doctor Who* range, all of which are very well done. I haven't seen all of the range 'in the metal', but the photographs make them look 'excellent' (quoth the Cyberleader). It was also interesting to see *Superpower* in its production livery – a far more tasteful box than the one shown in *Dwarf*. Inside, Albie Fiore has done a great job on the board and card designs, and what's more, it plays well!

After shurveying the bar, a quick visit to *Matthew Harvey & Co* revealed what was new with *Tunnels & Trolls*. Although the first published solo adventures available were for *T&T*, they failed to take off because the buyer also needed to have the *T&T* rule book – it took the *Fighting Fantasy* series to bring out solo adventures complete with their own system. Now *T&T* has followed suit, and some of the original *T&T solos (Naked Doom* and *Deathtrap Equaliser*), as well as a few new ones, have been re-released in book format complete with a short version of the rules. The *T&T* rules are also now available in book format.

Whilsht on the shubject of booksh, shomeone at the bar told me that *Corgi's Dragon Warriors* books are selling well as a boxed set, but disappointingly as individual books. I'm told that the distributors adopted a regional approach: Book 1 went to one part of the country, Book 2 to another part, and Book 3 elsewhere. . . . *Corgi* have apparently ditched these distributors, and even now a relaunch is planned.

THAT MARTINI MOMENT
Thud and Blunder '86 will take place over the weekend of 30th May – 1st June; it is described as a 'top class wargames weekend for experienced players or complete novices.' As well as games brought along by attendees, *D&D, Golden Heroes, RuneQuest*, historic battles, *Traveller*, and *Star Fleet Battles* will be available. For more details write to: Theobalds College, Bulls Cross Ride, Waltham Cross, Herts EN7 5HW.

In the States, *Tri-State Con*, sponsored by Cincinnati Adventure Gamers, will take place over May 16th-18th. The convention will feature boardgames, role-playing miniatures, an auction, game dealers, and a large fantasy role-playing tournament. For more information, write to: *Tri-State Con '86*, PO Box 1754, Cincinnati, OH 45231, USA.

The biggest convention this year is, of course, *Origins*, which takes place over 3rd-6th June at the Los Angeles Airport Hilton. For more information contact: *Origins 86*, PO Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808. A mark of the size and importance of *Origins* is that plans are already underway for the 1987 convention, which will take place on the Baltimore waterfront.

Role-playing is becoming increasingly popular in Europe, and in Italy a National League of Dungeon Masters has been formed. They are holding their second nationwide *AD&D* championships, which will already have finished by the time you read this. I mention this because one of the people involved, Marcelio Missiroli, is interested in trying to form a European Role-Playing Association of some sort. The idea is to take in the whole of Europe on an 'informal' basis – not run by manufacturers or worried about using official material, etc. If anyone's interested, write to the *WD Letters* page and get some discussion going!

CORPSE REVIVER
Live action role-playing is not dead! The *Labyrinth Club* have had plans for some while, but haven't wanted to announce anything until they were thoroughly organised. The club has been running adventures for members only since last May, and since January in its current venue. The location is, in fact, Chislehurst Caves in Kent, the once intended location for *Treasure Trap's* activities. *Labyrinth* would like to stress that they have no connection with *TT*, apart from having lost money to them! The most encouraging news about this new venture is that there is to be no one-off membership fee. You simply pay by adventure, and this payment includes your membership fee – so if you only go once, you only pay once. What's more, if you fancy playing the monsters then it's actually free.

After the last hoo-ha over Chislehurst Caves, intrepid *Dwarf* journalists have taken the step of checking with the location's owner and manager that all is well. And since the caves are only a few miles down the road from one of our correspondents, you'd better watch out! – something loathsome could be lurking in a dark passage. . . .

A RUM PUNCH
Wacky, wacky, wacky. Next issue Pete Tamlyn opens *The Crazy File*, the Justice Department's records on some of the stranger crazes to have hit Mega-City One – a must for all *Judge Dredd* game masters! Marcus Rowland gives chase in *The Cars That Ate Sanity* for *Call of Cthulhu*, whilst Phil Masters is *Spellbound!* by magic in Superhero games. There are hobbits galore in the *MERP* and *D&D* adventure, and *A Cast of Thousands* in a revealing article about non-player characters. For newcomers to SF rolegames, *The Final Frontier* boldly goes into the *Star Trek* role-playing game. *2020 Vision, Critical Mass* and all our regular features round off a quite remarkable issue! □

Dragonmeet 86

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Future Dragonmeets include:

London	10 May 1986
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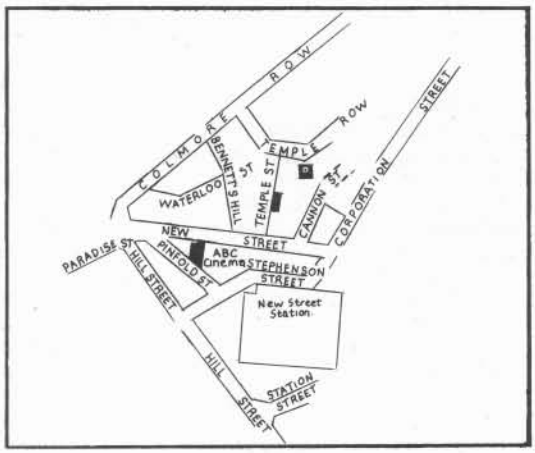
York	to be announced



Our new Conventions Organiser is SEAN NOONAN. He is based at our Head Office :

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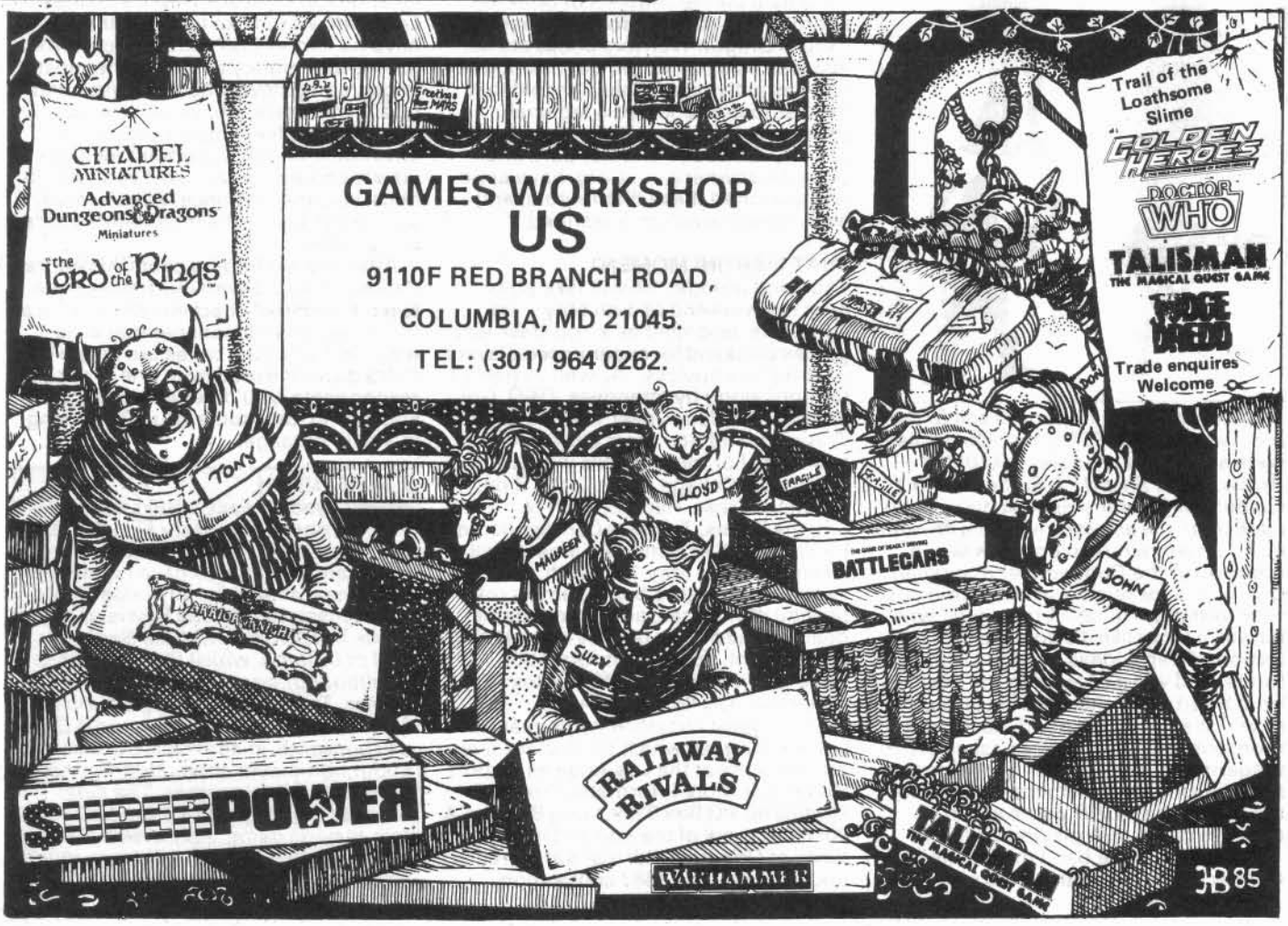

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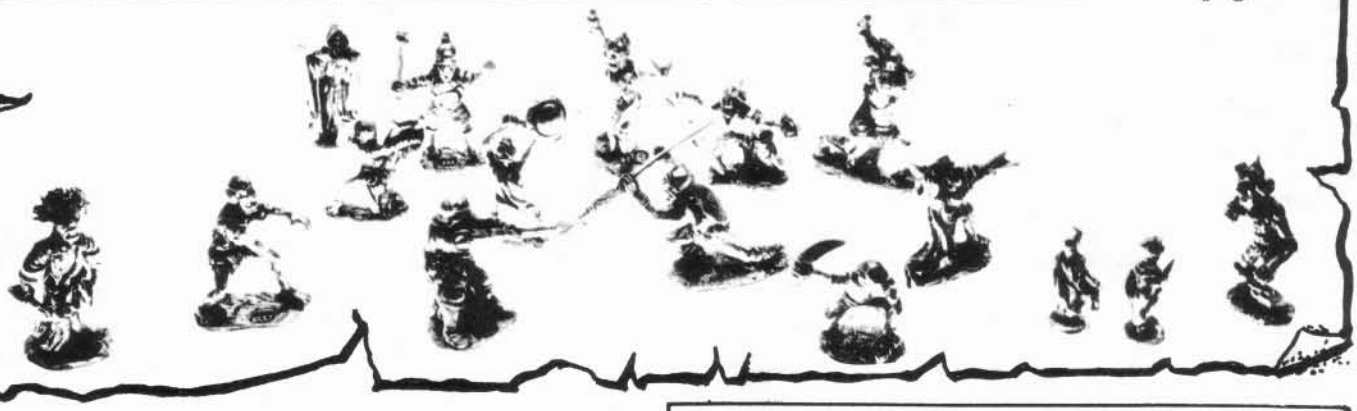

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Tabletop Heroes *is a regular column for figure modellers and painters, written by Joe Dever.*

OILS

Part Two: Application

When using oils for the first time, choose a subject that has very little armour and a relatively large area of exposed flesh, such as a troll or unarmoured orc, so that you can practise bleeding colours to achieve realistic skin tones. As with all miniatures, the first step is to prepare the casting and prime it with a suitable undercoat; in this case a matt white enamel.

The first colour to apply is a deep shadow to all the creases and areas of heavy shade. Our orc or troll requires green skin tones, and you should use cadmium yellow and ultramarine, mixing them by adding the darker colour to the lighter one (never the other way around). If you have never used oils before, you may be tempted to mix them with your brush, but this must be avoided for it will ruin the bristles very quickly. Use a cocktail stick for mixing, and bear in mind that the main problem with mixing all shades is misuse of black and white. Light and delicate colours such as yellow, white, pale browns and reds immediately turn muddy and grey if you add black. Similarly, deep reds, browns, blues and greens dull considerably if you add white. Alternative colours to black and white should be used, respectively, for darkening and lightening your base colour.

Having applied your deep shadow, now prepare a mid-tone. The mid-tone green on our orc is achieved by adding more yellow, or a lighter shade of yellow, to the basic mix. Use a medium to thin out the paint and aim for a consistency that is smooth but not runny. Apply the mid-tone sparingly to the relevant areas of the figure, and blend it into the deep shadow tone, (which will still be wet) where the two colours meet.

Highlights come next, and should be applied as with the mid-tone – but take care to avoid contaminating the brightest highlights (tops of shoulders, bridge of nose, cheekbones, top of head, etc) with any hint of mid-tone. With the skin completed, set aside the figure and allow it to dry.

With oils, the drying time is measured in days, not hours, but the process can be accelerated by the use of quick-drying mediums (see *TTH, WD75*). When the skin has dried, re-prime all clothing, teeth, eyes and armour with a matt white enamel and leave to dry. The procedure for clothing, weapons and all accessories is exactly the same as for skin tones: begin with deep shadows and work up to the highlights. For armour, try thinning some Ivory Black with turpentine and apply it like a wash. Wrap a piece of fluff-free cotton (a piece of old shirt or handkerchief will do) around the handle of a paint brush and tie it in place with cotton thread. Use this to wipe away the black oil wash from ridges before it dries; you will find that the armour is shaded by the wash, and the more you wipe it the brighter will be the finish.

It is difficult to be precise when recommending the mixing of oil colours to achieve new shades and tones, for the possibilities seem endless. However, take care when using reds and blues for they are the most vibrant pigments and should be added in the smallest quantities. Experiment with mixing, and should you achieve a special colour that you particularly like, be sure to note the constituents and the proportions used, so that you'll be able to reconstruct it again with ease.

BASIC GUIDE TO MIXING OILS

Colour	Deep Shadow	Mid-Tone	Highlight
Light Blue	Cobalt Blue	Prussian Blue	Prussian Blue + White
Dark Blue	Ultramarine	Cobalt Blue	Prussian Blue
Purple	Dark Cadmium Red + Ultramarine	Windsor Violet	Windsor Violet + White
Red	Dark Cadmium Red + Burnt Sienna	Vermilion	Cadmium Yellow
Orange	Burnt Sienna	Vermilion + Cadmium Yellow	Chrome Yellow
Yellow	Yellow Ochre	Cadmium Yellow	Chrome Yellow
Green	Ultramarine + Cadmium Yellow	Ultramarine + Chrome Yellow	Cobalt Blue + Chrome Yellow
Brown	Burnt Umber	Burnt Sienna	Burnt Sienna + Cadmium Yellow
Tan	Burnt Sienna	Yellow Ochre + Burnt Sienna	Yellow Ochre + White
White	White + (touch) Burnt Sienna	White	White
Grey	Ivory Black + White	White + (touch) Ivory Black	White
Black	Ivory Black	Black + (touch) Ultramarine	Black + (touch) White

THIS MONTH'S PHOTOGRAPHS

Two recent additions to the ever-expanding *Judge Dredd* range are seen here in *Figs 1* and *3*. Mortis and Fire (together with Fear, not shown) form *Citadel's JD6*: *The Dark Judges* pack, which sells for £1.95. Dredd fans can look forward to a steady stream of perps, mutants, and even an Angel Gang boxed set (due for release next month).

Scourge of mind flayers everywhere are the three Githyanki that comprise *Citadel's ADD69* pack (£1.95), one of which is shown here in *Fig 2*. Further additions to the popular *AD&D* range will include *Oriental Adventurers* and higher level monsters.

Part of a new modular system of 15mm SF buildings is the Computer Control Centre (*Torchlight SF10*: 65p) seen in *Fig 4*. Everything from an isolated space outpost to a full city complex can be created from the *Torchlight* SF range of buildings and accessories. The resin-cast models offer SF gamers extremely good value for their money, and new releases are being added to the catalogue every month.

'Scaley Axel', featured in *Fig 5*, is a 90mm high, 10-piece kit, designed by Chub Pearson, and available from *Barton Miniatures* (*BM/FAN 3*: £11.40 inc p&p). This model was painted mainly in oils by Pete Wasylko, with the tarnished armour finish achieved by washing a thin oil and turpentine mix over a basic metallic enamel base coat. Note the blood dripping from the axe blade (a drop of *Araldite*, moulded as it hardened, before being painted with a gloss crimson enamel).

Fig 6 shows a prize-winning foursome of *Citadel C15 Orcs* from the talented hands of Pete Benson. Note the care and attention to detail Pete has lavished on those bases, and the subtle use of yellow highlights on the basic green skin tones.

Once again Tim Olsen reveals his flair for dry-brushing and black-lining in *Fig 7*, a Red Dragon from the *Citadel DG* range (*DG5*: £6.50). Tim recently moved from London to take over *Games Workshop's* Manchester store, and further examples of his work are on display at the shop.

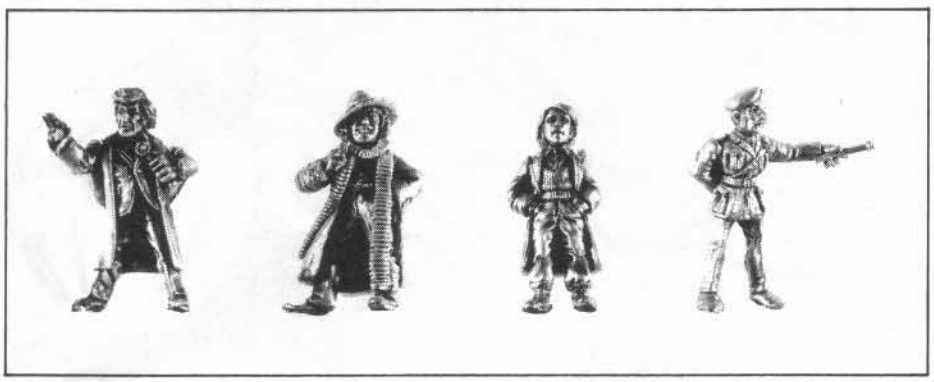
Although not strictly a miniature in the true sense, the model featured in *Fig 8* illustrates what good figure painting can achieve. Adrian Bay's 'Yoda' started out as a nondescript plastic model from the *Star Wars* range and was transformed into a work of art by careful dry-brushing with acrylic and enamel paints. □

Useful Addresses

Barton Miniatures, Unit 6A, Vinces Road Ind Est, Diss, Norfolk IP22 3HQ. Send SAE for lists.

Torchlight Fantasy/Sci-Fi, Brookside Works, Springfield Drive, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex. Send a 10p stamp plus an SAE for latest lists.

Citadel Miniatures, Chewton Street, Hilltop, Eastwood, Notts. Subscription to Citadel Journal: £6.00 per year.



Let's do the Time Warp again . . .

Fig 1

Fig 2

Fig 3

Fig 4

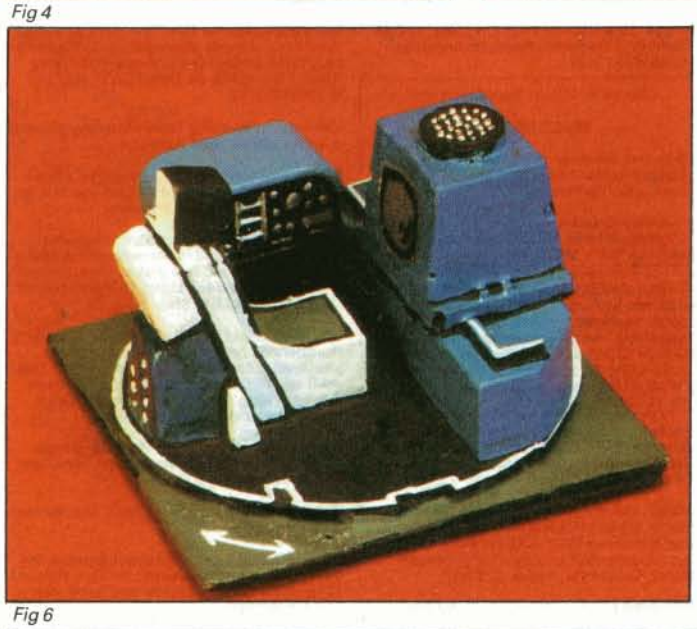
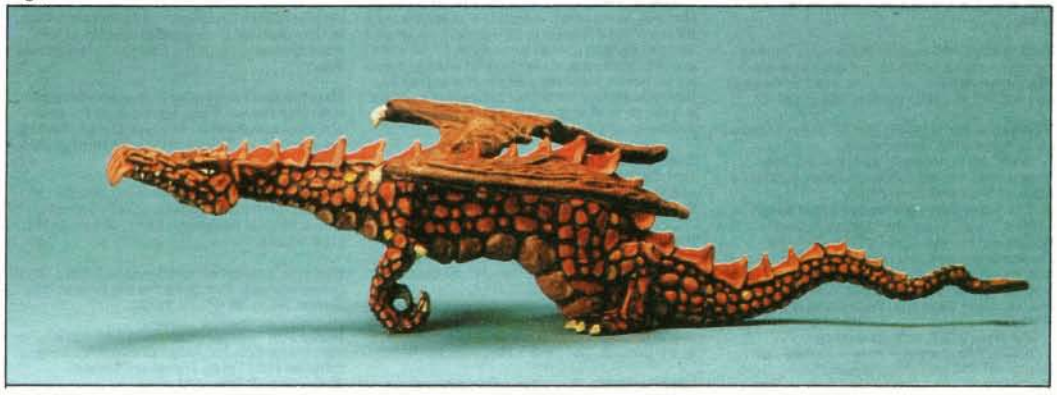


Fig 5

Fig 6

Fig 8

Fig 7



Photos 1, 2, 3: Phil Lewis
Photos 4, 6, 7: Joe Dever
Photo 5: Pete Wasylko
Photo 8: Adrian Bay

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White Dwarf *regrets that it cannot be held responsible for financial transactions arising from small ads. Readers are advised to take appropriate precautions before parting with any money.*

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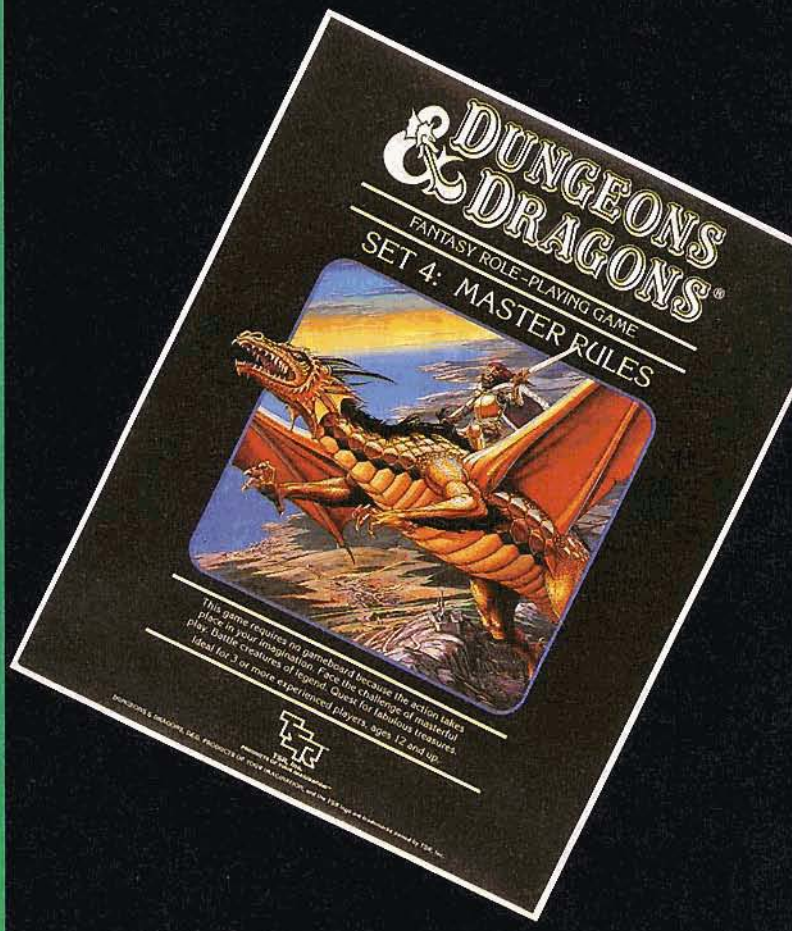

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THE DOCTOR WHO

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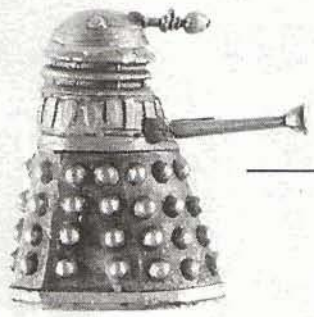

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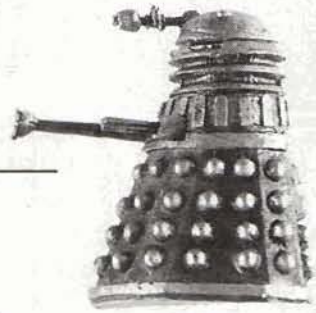

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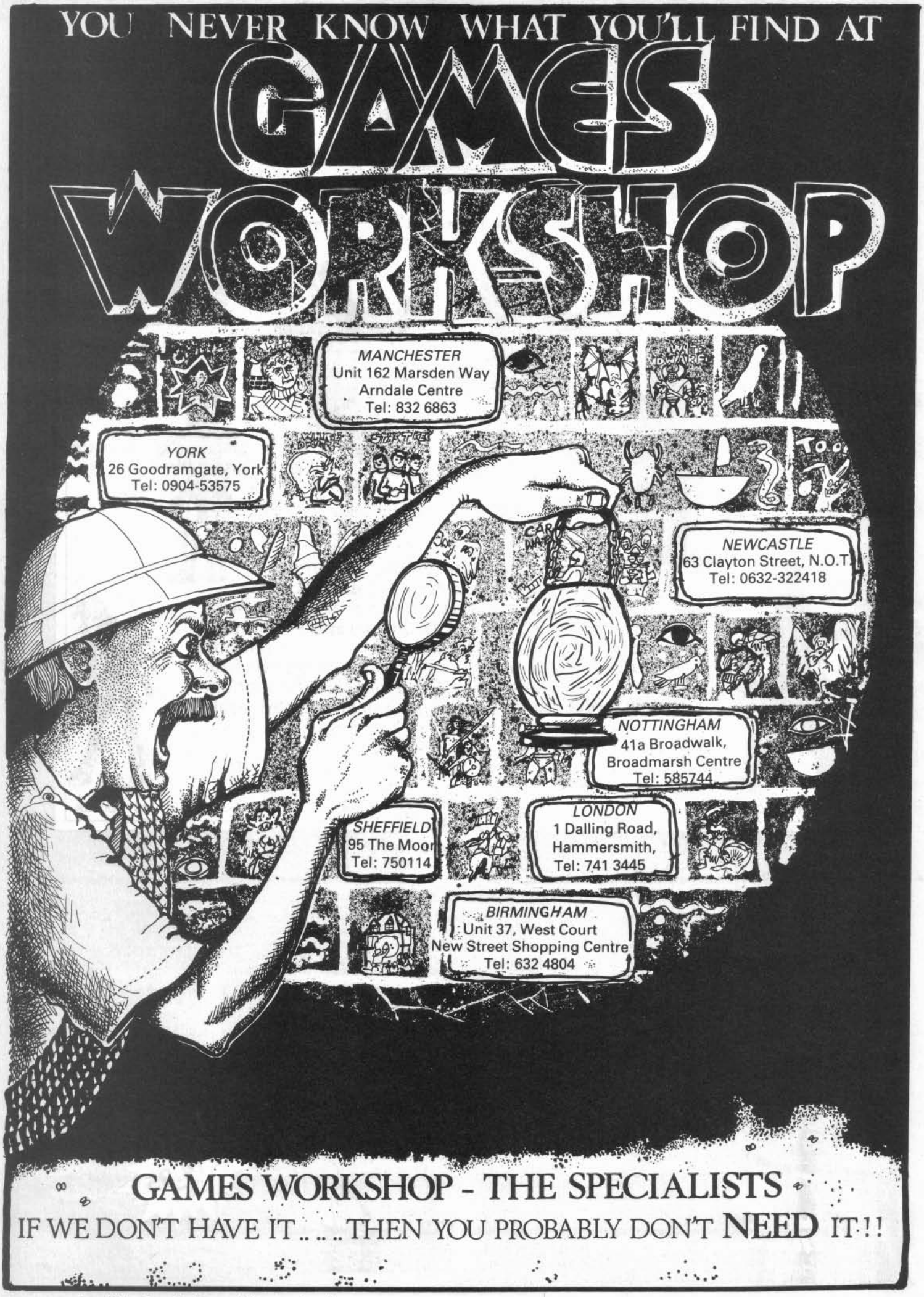
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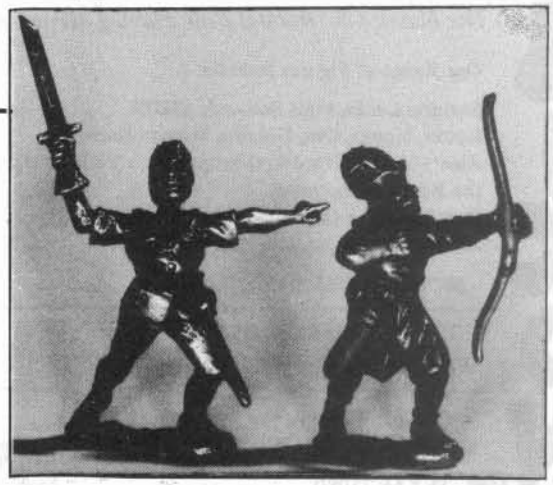

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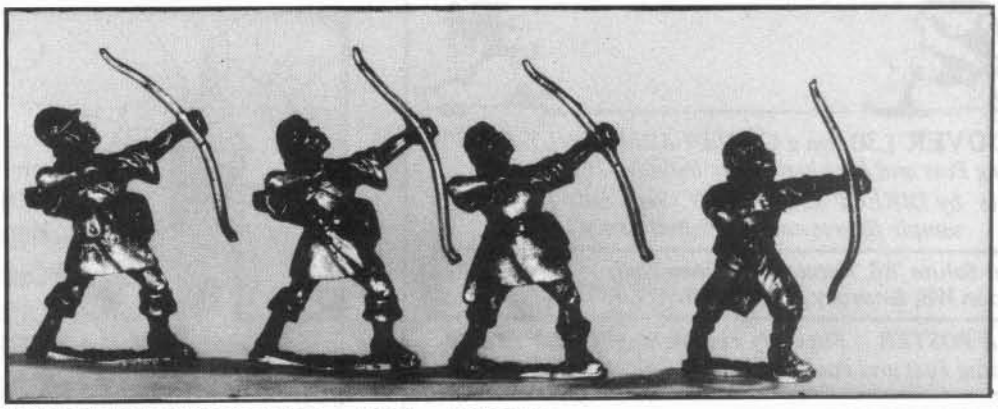

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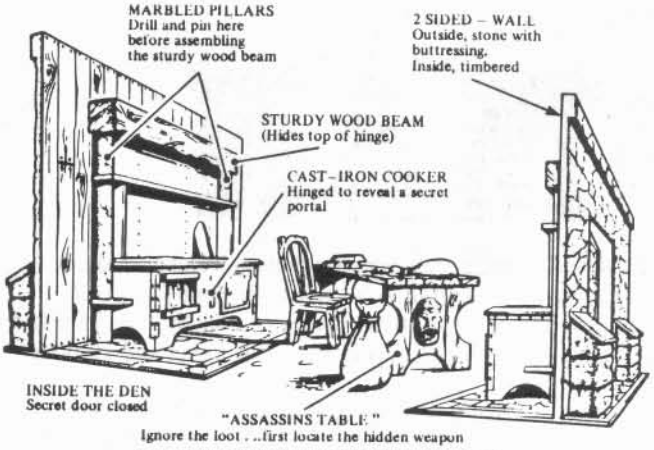

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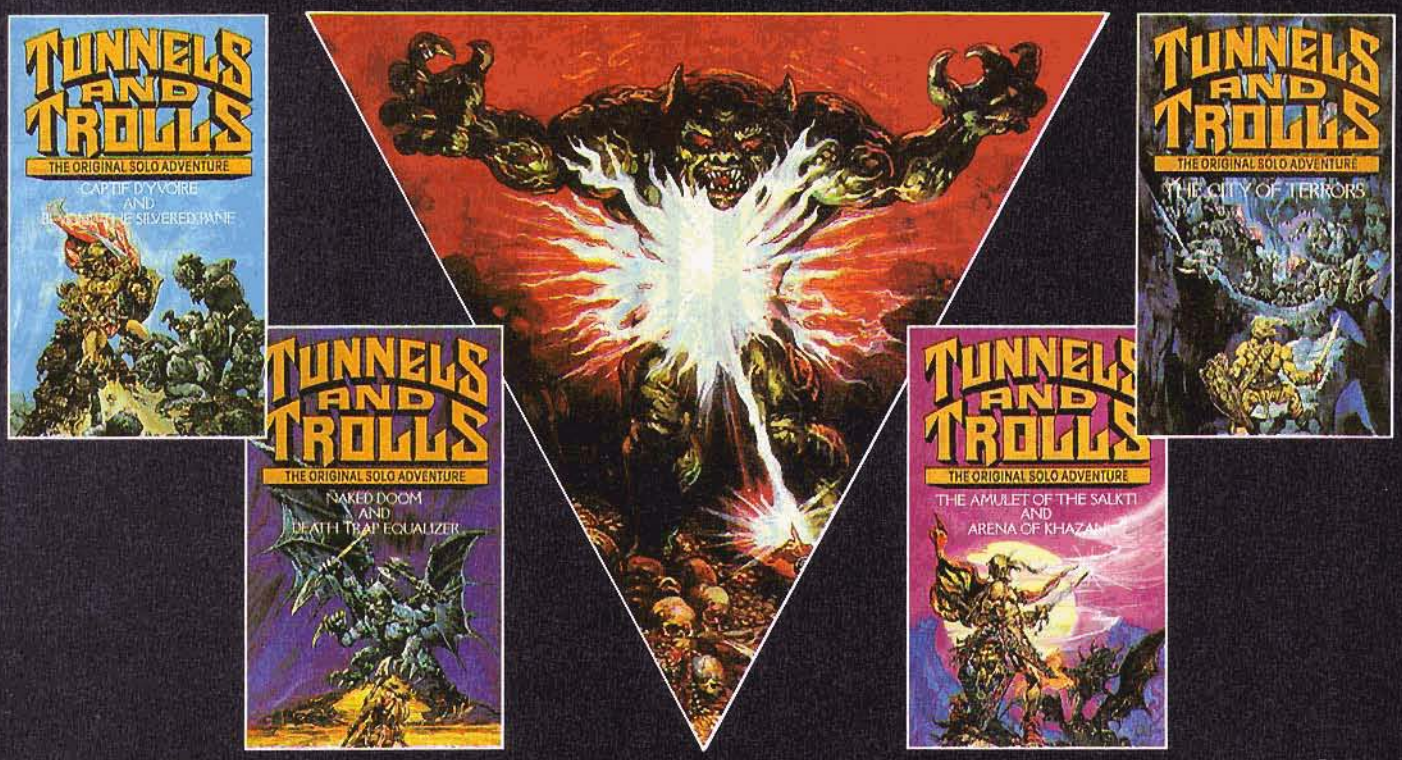

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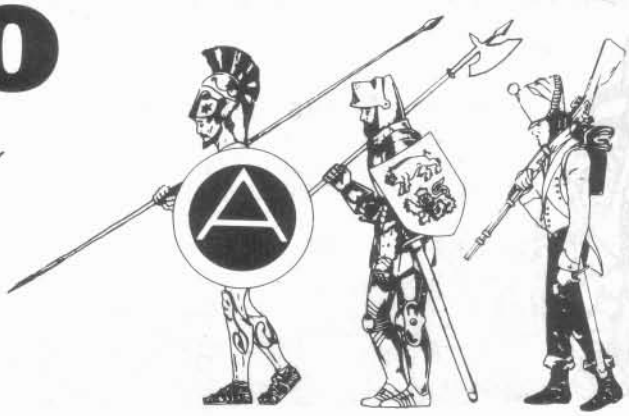

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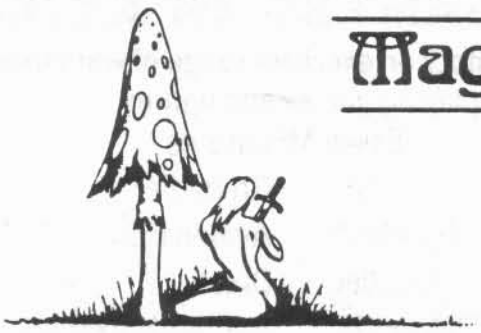

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MAYOR'S VISITORS ARE NOT CANNIBALS

By the Bugle Staff

Blah, blah blah, rhubarb, blah, rhubarb, blah, allegations hotly denied, blah, rhubarb.

Rhubarb, blah, rhubarb, blah, blah, blah,no policemen missing after being assigned, blah, blah blah, rhubarb, blah, blah blah, rhubarb, blah, rhubarb, blah, no truth whatsoever, blah, rhubarb.

Rhubarb, blah, rhubarb, blah, blah, blah,Mayor's department suffered minor food-poisoning, blah, blah blah, rhubarb, blah, rhubarb, blah, blah, blah, blah, harrumph, blah, rhubarb-blah, lobster thermidor blah, blah blah, rhubarb, blah, rhubarb.

Blah, blah, blah, blah, harrumph, blah, rhubarb-blah, no proof of misbehaviour blah, rhubarb, blah, blah, blah, blah, harrumph, blah, [illegible]-blah, Civic reception cancell[illegible]

SPIDER-VIGILANTE

Editorial By
J. JONAH JAMESON

Recently, one issue has taken over the headlines and front pages of this city's newspapers. Television and radio news casts seem obssessed with the controversy, politicians steer away from it as if it were the plague. I am referring, of course, to the subject of vigilantism.

The approach of most of the tabloids and news departments are taking is that of the "New Right" or conservative movement that is making itself known in this country by way of individual acts of vigilatism. The trend toward accepting vigilantes started years ago, and started in this very city. We have had vigilantes roaming our streets since then, posing as costumed crimefighters. But are they crimefighters, or are they power-hungry anarchists who thrive on their ability to be judge, jury and, sometimes, executioner all at once? This is the beginning of a twelve part editorial series covering the subject of vigilantism and those who use it in the guise of heroism. We will be looking at heroes who have been branded vigilantes in the past, but have proven time and time again that they serve and protect the city and the country; heroes such as the Avengers under government supervision. We will also look at the growing fear of mutants and whether they should be allowed to exercise their powers unregistered and uncontrolled. But, for the first two installments of, we will look at a costumed hoodlum

(editorial continued on page 4)

COURT BUILDING TO BE REDONE

By Julie Laskin
of the Bugle Staff

"Battered, worn, and ready to collapse," is how Judge Martin Miller recently blah, blah blah, rhubarb, blah, rhubarb, blah, jovial mood in the Criminal Courts building, harrumph, blah, rhubarb.

Rhubarb, blah, rhubarb, blah, blah, blah, 50 trials involving villains with enhanced powers, blah, blah blah, rhubarb, blah, rhubarb, blah, blah, blah, blah, harrumph, blah, [illegible]-blah, new judges' chambers

"...as much threat as protection to our people."

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AIRPORT SECURITY TIGHTENED

By Max Sterling

UPA

UPA journalist Max Sterling has disc[illegible] that officials at New York's